THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC QUARTERLY REVIEW

Bonum est homini ut eum veritas vincat volentem, quia malum est homini ut eum veritas vincat invitum. Nam ipsa vincat necesse est, sive negantem sive confitentem. S. AUG. EPIST. ccxxxviii, AD PASCENT.

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THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC

QUARTERLY REVIEW

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THE CATHOLIC APOLOGIST.

VIII

THE PAPACY

WE HAVE already seen that Christ built upon Peter a Church, One, World-wide, Infallible, Indestructible; the Church known to St. Paul as "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1. Tim. iii, 15.) It constantly occupies His thoughts, He alludes to it in various parables under the title of His Kingdom, in these parables forestalling many of the objections that would hereafter be raised against it. It is like a grain of mustard seed, small indeed in the beginning but growing to be very great: it is like a net cast into the sea gathering all kinds of fish, bad and good: it is like a householder with an inexhaustible supply of precious things in his treasury: it is like a king who made a marriage for his son to which he invited many and was met by refusal: it is like wise and foolish virgins at a marriage feast: and so forth. To Pilate He expressly speaks of it as the Kingdom of truth. (John xviii., 37.) It is His one true Fold to which eventually all His sheep, all men of good will, must be brought.

From the frequent application of the term "Kingdom" one would be disposed to infer that Christ intended to give His Church a monarchical constitution, and so indeed He did.

There is one Apostle, whom from the very first He singles out conferring upon him a marked pre-eminence. When first this Apostle is brought to Him, He immediately gives him the significant

appellation of the "Rock." The name of this Apostle invariably heads the list whenever in the Gospels the names of the twelve are given. Christ is always closely associated with him; when Jesus transferred His residence from Nazareth to Capharnaum it seems likely that He lodged in Peter's house, at any rate, Christ bids him pay the didrachma "for Me and for thee;" in some way the twain were very closely associated. It is from Peter's boat that Christ teaches the multitude. On this Apostle He states as clearly as words can express that he will build His Church in recognition of Peter's confession of faith in His own divinity, "And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father Who is in Heaven. And I say to thee: that thou art Peter (a rock); and upon this rock will I build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

Now! no sane person multiplies meaningless phrases to perplex his hearers without purpose: much less Incarnate Deity. It is, then, quite certain that by these words Christ meant something and something very great. We may well ask, if He did not intend by them to confer upon St. Peter the primacy in His Church, goodness gracious! what did He mean? Like the wise man in His own parable He built His house on a rock not on the shifting sands of human opinion.

Again, shortly before His Passion, when He knew He was soon to depart out of this world He says to Peter: "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you (plural) that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee (singular) that thy faith fail not: and thou, being once converted (or perhaps better, 'thou in thy turn'), confirm thy brethren" (Luke xxii., 31-32). Most decisively Christ makes St. Peter the confirmer of the faith of his brethren. If this is not what we know as "papal infallibility," it is extremely hard to say what is. The house does not give stability to the rock on which it is built, it is the rock which gives stability to the house.

St. Peter falls into the personal sin of denying his Lord. Lest, therefore, the others might think that, on this account, he had forfeited his official prerogatives, Christ, in the presence of them all, once more confirms him in his office of "Supreme Pastor" (John xxi., 15-17), whereby, we know that the official capacity of Christ's duly appointed minister is not dependent upon his personal holiness.

These are the words of Incarnate Deity: and there before our eyes stands the Papacy, a staring, glaring patent fact: the most outstanding fact in the entire history of Europe and the world. the one imperishable throne. Those words have begotten that fact. Now! what are we to say about it? The Papacy is one of two things, either it is a divine institution, or else it is a human accretion, part illusion, part fraud, founded upon a misinterpretation of the words of Jesus Christ. Here again we are up against a dilemma from which there is no escape. Is it conceivable that the most stable throne which ever existed, the greatest, most permanent, most widely extended power the world has ever known, is based upon nothing better than a misinterpretation of the words of Christ? I ask, is it conceivable? The Papacy is the nerve-center, the unifying principle in the Catholic Church, it is the means, and the only means one can think of as possible, by which that miraculous unity of faith is preserved amongst all those far-flung millions. Can this be the result of illusion and fraud? Again I ask, is it conceivable? Yet no other alternative explanation is left to those who deny that the Papacy is a divine institution. A Protestant officer once remarked to me, "If I had to build a Church, I would build it like the Roman Catholic Church." Of course he would, what other way is there of building a Church which is to preserve a revelation and teach it till the end of time?

Furthermore, those who still maintain that the Papacy is nothing but a human error, must perforce admit that Christ uttered words most apt to lead His followers into error, which as a matter of fact did lead them into that error, in which error the greater part of them remain to this day.

But if it is a divine institution, the only alternative left, then all Christians are under moral obligation to submit themselves to that authority ordained by God.

If it be urged that these words were addressed to St. Peter alone and were not intended to apply to his successors, I answer that this objection strikes at the very root of Christianity much more deeply than those who urge it realize; for the most part they are sawing off the branch on which themselves are sitting. The objection, however, is altogether invalid; Christ built His Church to endure for all time: whatsoever, therefore, appertains to the essential constitution of the Church, the Primacy, the Hierarchy, the Sacraments, etc., are by a necessary inference for all time to come also. You cannot separate a thing from what is of its very essence, without destroying the entire fabric. To say that Christ built His Church on Peter only for Peter's life-time is simply absurd: it is like saying that a

man built a house, the foundation of which he subsequently intended to remove. There are undoubtedly many silly people in the world, but Christ was not one of them.

IX

Counter Theories

In this chapter I will briefly pass in review a few of the theories which are put forward to supersede the old Catholic ideal of One, Living, Indestructible, Infallible Church, guardian and interpreter of Christ's revelation to man.

At the outset, I will ask the reader first to call to mind what was said in the chapter on the Nature of Revealed Truth. We saw there that Christ delivered His revelation demanding from men its acceptance, promising eternal life to those who believed and practised it, threatening with eternal damnation those who refused to believe. Obviously, then, there is some body of truth beyond the reach of reason, yet which we are most strictly and sternly called upon to believe; a body of truth sure as God is sure; quite clear-cut and definite; accessible to all, even the most illiterate; easy to find if we will but seek it aright and dispose our souls to receive it.

Now let us glance at some of the theories put forward to replace the ancient Catholic position.

(A) There is the old-fashioned Protestant theory that each one should read the Bible for himself, and, trusting in the guidance of the Holy Ghost, extract therefrom revealed truth.

It will be seen at a glance that this theory bristles with insuperable difficulties. In the first place it altogether excludes the illiterate, who even at the present day must number, I suppose, a good half of the human race. In the nature of the case these must rely upon an interpreter: which is indeed a great concession. These must either choose the Catholic Church claiming, on Christ's authority, to be an infallible guide in matters of revelation; or they must be content with the exposition of one or other of the multifarious sects, not one of which will dare to claim infallibility; with them he cannot feel sure that what he is told is what Christ taught.

Then again, the Holy Scriptures are not in the form of simple catechetical instructions: on the contrary, they are often most deep and difficult. To study them with thoroughness would require as a preliminary equipment the knowledge of at least three dead languages. On the face of it they call for a divinely appointed interpreter.

Finally, the crucial test of experience shows that those who apply

this method, do not arrive at unity of faith, but rather have become a byword of disunion and discord.

(B) Let us now consider the Undenominationalist, Non-sectarian, Broad, Liberal attitude or by whatsoever other name it is known, for we can group them altogether as more or less the same. They hold that there is only one thing really important and that is to lead good, straight, clean lives in accordance with Christian morality; that in every denomination there is a certain residuum of basic dogma common to all, which suffices: that all questions outside this small residuum are to be counted non-essential, and concerning them there must be a mutual, good-humoured give and take. This all sounds very charitable and tolerant, the main objection to it being that it is utter nonsense. It is nothing but a counsel of despair, which many, perceiving the hopeless confusion generated by the individual interpretation of Scripture yet unwilling to submit themselves to Peter and enter into Catholic unity, have adopted as the only expedient left.

Just examine it. My submission to the Christian moral code rests on precisely the same basis as my belief in Christian dogma, namely the Authority of Christ Whom I believe to be God Incarnate. If I did not believe this, why should I submit myself to the Christian moral code? The yoke of an impostor, who, claiming to be God, was not God: who, claiming to change bread and wine into his own body and blood did not change bread and wine into His body and blood: who, claiming to confer upon his ministers the power to remit sin, did not confer upon his ministers any such power. Why on earth should I adopt his moral code? I certainly should do nothing of the kind. Slowly but surely people are beginning to see this. Why not with Nietzsche clear away the "accumulated rubbish" of the centuries?

But for one who believes that Christ is God, as he accepts His ethical teaching as divine, so also he accepts as divine His dogmatic and speculative teaching; when Incarnate Deity says over bread and wine, "this is My Body, this is My Blood: do this in remembrance of Me": when He says "whose sins ye remit they are remitted, whose sins ye retain they are retained"; when He says "thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it": how can the believer in Christ's divinity ignore as meaningless, utterances so solemn. Yet the undenominationalist calls them non-essentials, he would have it that there is no difference worth speaking about between two persons, one of whom affirms and the other denies the same predicate of the same subject

under identical conditions, in matters so solemn, so awful, and so fraught with consequences as these. Heaven above us! what are we coming to as reasonable beings.

Cato was wont to say he wondered how two augurs could meet each other without smiling: I am disposed to wonder how two non-sectarians can do so.

Moreover, in perusing the epistles of the New Testament there is nothing that more forcibly strikes us than their rigid intolerance of false doctrine. The latitudinarian may not like it and might wish it were otherwise; but he may just as well face manfully the facts of the case and acknowledge what is so patently evident, that the Apostles knew nothing of adjustment and compromise.

(C) The last theory with which I will deal is that of the high Anglican. He admits the necessity of a teaching Church guardian and exponent of revealed truth. This is a step in the right direction. But he goes on to say that owing to schisms (who was right and who wrong apparently does not matter very much) the Church remains now in a state of paralysis and cannot any more decide matters of controversy. To know the true faith, therefore, we must search into the records of what he calls the undivided Church. This does not appear to be any easier than the method of searching out the faith by an individual appeal to Holy Scripture: and it produces much the same pleasing variety of conclusions.

Then again, how far back are we to go to find the Anglican's undivided Church? Who should be included in it, and who not? These are questions extremely hard to answer; whenever the Anglican attempts to do so he immediately finds himself involved in an inextricable tangle. Wisely enough, therefore, he usually leaves the question in its present nebulous condition. Furthermore, it does not take into account that Christ did not say, "Going teach all nations and behold I am with you up to the end of the fourth or fifth century," but He said, "Going teach all nations and behold I am with you to the consummation of the world."

The fact of the matter is that all these and such-like are engaged in the absolutely illegitimate logical operation of what we may call, for want of a better name, "faking the middle term."

The Baptist says:

The true Church of Christ consists of those who reject infant baptism. But, etc. Therefore, etc.

The Presbyterian says:

The true Church of Christ consists of those who are ruled by presbyters instead of bishops. But, etc. Therefore, etc.

The undenominationalist says:

The true Church of Christ consists of those who lead good lives and do not worry about dogma. But, etc. Therefore, etc.

The high Anglican says:

The true Church of Christ consists of all who have valid orders and sacraments and maintain the doctrine of the Church of the first few centuries. But, etc. Therefore, etc.

And so on with them all.

Give me leave to make my own term of comparison or middle term and I will prove anything you like. Why should not I found a sect of the Feet-Washers, whose principal religious exercise would consist in this agreeable occupation? I could make my middle term "those who wash one another's feet" and argue thus:

The true Church of Christ consists of those who wash one another's feet. But, etc. Therefore, etc.

My sect would certainly have far better warranty of Holy Scripture than many others.

You can no more fabricate a middle term than you can create a universe, you have got to accept what is given you by nature or revelation as the case may be.

The short cut, therefore, to the confutation of all these theories is simply to apply to them the term of comparison laid down by Jesus Christ. It is this: (a) My Church, i. e., having none other than Christ Himself as its founder, (b) built on Peter, (c) Catholic or world-wide, (d) visibly One, (e) infallible, (f) indestructible. Will any of these be found to agree with Christ's middle term? Not one of them. The only Church which does agree with it in every point is the Catholic and Roman Church; this, then, is the True Church of Jesus Christ, guardian and exponent of His revelation.

X

Current Objections

I shall now touch upon a few current objections urged against the Catholic position. They have been so often refuted before that it seems scarcely worth while to waste time and space over them. For the most part I shall content myself with pointing out the logical fallacy which they contain, since this will not be altogether wanting in novelty.

At the outset I will call attention to the fact that almost all the current objections put forward against the Catholic argument are side-issues, the main position remains not only impregnable, but

practically unassailed. Our adversaries rarely, if ever, venture on a frontal attack.

We will begin with an objection of some subtlety. The Church guards revelation from error by formulating dogmatic definitions on articles of faith. It is argued that human language cannot express divine mysteries, and so these definitions are worthless.

The argument would run thus:

Human language cannot express divine mysteries.

The dogmas of the Church are couched in human language.

The dogmas of the Church cannot express the divine mysteries they profess to express.

This argument at first sight looks formidable; the mind is more subtle than its instrument, language; yet the mind cannot grasp divine mysteries; much less then can language express them.

If, however, we examine it more closely we shall see that the fallacy is to be found in an ambiguity in the major term. "To express" has two meanings, i. e., "to express adequately" and "to express accurately." Granted that language cannot express adequately divine mysteries, but neither can it adequately express the simplest thing in nature. The chemical formula H_2O does not adequately express what water is: but it expresses it quite accurately, and if you depart from that formula you are inaccurate about the composition of water. In the same way a dogmatic definition though necessarily inadequate, can yet quite accurately express a divine mystery, so that anyone who departs from it errs from the faith. These definitions are accurate but not adequate expressions of divine things

I will here give some examples of objections involving the fallacy of the ambiguous middle term, for example:

To worship any but God is idolatry.

Catholics worship the Virgin Mary.

Catholics are guilty of idolatry.

"Worship" is ambiguous: it may mean "divine worship" which is due to God alone, or it may mean that "inferior worship" or "giving honour" which everyone accords to those who are eminent in rank, genius, or sanctity.

With this we may class the objections raised against the veneration of relics and images. Nothing could be more in accordance with the dictates of our human nature than these practices. We all reverence mementoes and pictures of those we hold dear: nor does the first commandment do more than forbid the making of images for the purpose of idolatrous worship, for if it were taken according to the rigour of the letter, all painting, photography, etc., would be unlawful: yet God Himself expressly ordered the making of images

for the tabernacle and the temple. The whole objection rests on nothing but the fallacy of an ambiguous term.

Again the objection: that Jesus Christ is the One Mediator, but that Catholics in praying to the Saints introduce other mediators, is founded on the same fallacy. The term "Mediator" is ambiguous, it may mean "Mediator of redemption" Who is only Christ, or it may mean "mediator of intercession" which we all are whenever we say the Lord's prayer.

Very similar to this is the fallacy of the undistributed middle term. In this case also though you seem to have only one term of comparison, you have in reality two. For example:

To prohibit freedom of opinion cramps the human intelligence.

The Church prohibits freedom of opinion.

The Church cramps the human intelligence.

Here we have seemingly one middle term, but in reality two, i. e., the prohibition of freedom of opinion in matters open to discussion, and the prohibition of freedom of opinion in matters closed to discussion.

Once God has revealed a truth it is as much closed to discussion as that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. To accept truth revealed by God does not cramp the intelligence, but expands it.

Somewhat analogous to this is the fallacy of the illicit process of the Major or Minor term: that is to say when the Major or Minor term is distributed in the conclusion over everything it stands for, but is not so distributed in the premisses. For example:

All doctrines contained in Holy Scripture are doctrines revealed by God.

Some Catholic doctrines are not contained in Holy Scripture.

Some Catholic doctrines are not revealed by God.

This does not follow, for there is an illicit process of the Major term. There may be doctrines revealed by God which are not at any rate explicitly contained in Holy Scripture. St. Paul expressly tells the Thessalonians (II Thess. ii., 14) to "hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by Epistle."

Or again:

To visit the fatherless and widows is true religion.

Enclosed Orders do not visit the fatherless and widows.

Enclosed Orders have not true religion.

One might just as well argue:

All soldiers are human beings.

All civilians are not soldiers.

All civilians are not human beings.

The fallacy is precisely the same; in both cases there has been an illicit process of the Major term. Another anti-Catholic objection arises from the low moral tone of some Catholic countries. The argument may, of course, be easily returned, for so is the moral tone of some Protestant countries very low. It is better, however, to leave that alone, for two blacks will not make a white. It will be found more convincing to point out that your opponent is guilty of the logical fallacy known as the "fallacy of the Cause." We can only judge of a religion by the principles it inculcates, not by the conduct of those who disregard its teaching. Not the Catholic religion, but its neglect, is the cause of all these disorders.

Similar is the argument drawn from the material progress of some non-Catholic countries, and the backwardness of some Cartholic countries. Many causes besides religion contribute to material progress, nor did Christ ever allude to it as a distinguishing mark of His true followers, but rather the reverse.

Another kind of fallacy known as the "ignorance of the question," consists in supposing a contradiction where none exists: for example:

The use of Ceremonies in worship is not commanded in the Gospels.

Catholics make use of Ceremonies in worship.

Catholics depart from the simplicity of the gospel.

The argument is altogether inconclusive, because a thing is not expressly commanded, does it therefore follow that it is forbidden? Not at all. Christ's saying, "You shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth," neither commands nor forbids ceremonies. We do, however, find them expressly commanded in the worship of the Temple. They are prophesied by Malachi in the worship of the New Testament, and they figure largely in the gorgeous visions of the Apocalypse.

Then again, watch the scope of an argument: the premisses can only generate the conclusion contained in them; they cannot do more. For example, those scurrilous stories that are sometimes passed around about walled-up nuns and convents full of babies' skeletons and such-like rubbish. These things, by the way, are always located in Mexico or Paraguay or somewhere sufficiently remote to render verification extremely difficult. But supposing they were really true, what would it prove? Would it prove that the Catholic Church was not the true Church of Christ? Nothing of the kind; it would only prove that there are tares among the wheat, that the net gathers of both kinds, bad and good. It would not prove less, it would not prove more.

Then there are those who object to confession, although when

Christ instituted the Sacrament of Penance, He could not possibly have put it in plainer language. When He said, "Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted; whose sins ye retain, they are retained," either He meant to institute the Sacrament of Penance, or He meant nothing. When Christ healed the man sick of the palsy (Matt. ix., 6.) He did so expressly in proof of His power as "Son of Man" to forgive sins "upon earth." His language is significant, for it implies that His Sacred Humanity as the instrument of His Divinity possessed this wonderful power. Which power He transmitted to His Apostles as an essential part of the Constitution of His Church, whose mission to the end of time is to combat sin. Strangely enough there are those who profess to believe in baptism for the remission of sin, yet refuse to believe in Absolution for the remission of post-baptismal sin. Is one more difficult than the other? Or is Christ less clear in the one case than in the other? But the objection of these persons is rather practical than speculative; confession may sound somewhat formidable, and only experience can teach them how really simple and how very consoling it is.

I have even heard an anti-Catholic controversalist object to the title of "Holy Father" given to the Sovereign Pontiff, because Christ said, "Call no man your father upon earth," the objector was apparently oblivious of the fact that St. Paul, who might be presumed to understand what was in the mind of Christ when He said it, nevertheless, lays claim to the title "father" (1 Cor. iv., 15): oblivious also that in the same breath Christ forbids the title "Master," which the objector uses over and over again without the slightest scruple. Evidently Holy Scripture requires an interpreter, if for no other reason, at least to indicate what must be understood according to the rigour of the letter and what according to the spirit.

Objections raised from the history of the Catholic Church and the promulgation of her dogmas would require special treatment, demanding more space than I care here to give it. Bear in mind, however, that by a dogmatic definition the Church does not and cannot add anything to the faith; she merely declares what it is. At the same time, it has been clearly recognized from the first that this process of declaration is progressive. Such is indicated to be the case by Christ when He says that the Spirit of Truth would bring to the mind of His Church whatsoever He had taught. Whereby He gives us to understand that the Church will declare the Faith as occasion demands and the impact of heresy requires. It is in this sense that St. Jerome interprets the parable of the mustard seed in his commentary on Matthew xiii. "The branches of the evangelical

tree, which grew from the grain of mustard seed, I hold to be the diversity of dogmas."

Scientific objections are best left to such competent apologists as Professor Windle. I will content myself with merely remarking that between natural and revealed truth there can never be any real opposition. If such seems to arise, it is either through the indiscretion of some theologian laying too great stress upon what is not an article of faith, but no more than an opinion; or more often through the dogmatism of men of science insisting on mere theories as though they were well-established facts. Moreover, whatsoever discoveries in natural science may be hereafter made, nothing will ever do away with the fact that there lived upon earth a Man Who claimed to be God and Who, by the fulfilment of prophecy, by stupendous miracles and finally by rising from the dead, established His claim. Nor will anything ever do away with the fact that He professed to build on Peter a Church which should endure forever.

I must not expend more time over objections. I have given some examples that the Catholic Apologist may know how to meet them. Let him bear in mind the monitions I gave in my first chapter. Do not seek controversy, but never be afraid of an antagonist, for the Catholic position is impregnable. Never lose your head or your temper. Be in no hurry, if you do not see an answer at once you have always plenty of time to think it over: he is a bad fighter who rushes wildly and hits blindly. See to it that your opponent does not assume a contradiction where none exists. Watch the scope of his argument; he cannot conclude more than his premisses will allow. Examine with searching scrutiny his middle term. And after every excursion in a side-path bring him back again and again to the main issue, that the Church in which the Spirit of Truth abides forever cannot falsify Christ's revelation. Have infinite patience with your adversary; you can clear away difficulties and you can show the reasonable basis of Faith. But you cannot give Faith; that belongs to God alone.

Conclusion

Having now accomplished what I set out to achieve, I may conclude. I have put into the hands of the Catholic Apologist the arguments of reason upon which our Faith rests. No one who has ever studied them, whether he believes or whether he does not believe, thinks of denying that they are of the utmost cogency. So cogent are they that with the greatest ingenuity they can hardly be evaded. They are indeed as they were intended to be sufficient to convince, sufficient to condemn. Only invincible ignorance can excuse

anyone from not entering into that One Fold founded by Christ the Lord. This we are thankful to feel we can grant in the case of the vast majority of our fellow countrymen. But we must not assume it too readily, for there are some such as those of whom St. Paul says: "If our Gospel be also hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers that the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God, should not shine unto them." (2 Cor. iv., 3-4.) The god of this world working upon pride of intellect, human respect, coveteousness, ambition, ill-regulated passion, or that sheer slothfulness of those who cannot be bothered with it! Alas! the number of these is not small.

By the arguments here set forth our Apologist will but have conducted the candid and earnest inquirer as far as the atrium and vestibule, the Faith itself lies enshrined within. Should he enter, he will find, very likely quite contrary to his expectations, that instead of his intellect being straitened and hemmed in there opens out before him a new and ample world of inexhaustible beauty. He will know that the Faith is not a mere jumble of burdensome and distressing dogmas, but a majestic and harmonious whole; the human utterance of the Word Eternal. Born anew of water and the Holy Ghost, we become incorporated in the Mystical Body of Christ; we acquire a new heredity to replace the vitiated heredity of Adam. We grow to love the Church of the Living God with a love far exceeding the most exalted patriotism. No other history is so intensely interesting. No other institution can show anything to compare with her illustrious roll of fame in every field of human endeavour.

As life goes on, we realize more and more fully the wonders of the Incarnation, that supreme expression of the love of God. Daily we come to know better the Motherhood of that Immaculate Virgin, who bore into this world the Redeemer, the first-born among many brethren. We perceive how little really separates us from the Angels of God and the spirits of the holy dead, for we are all one in Christ. The Faith enters into the very fibre of our being, uplifting us, refining us, enflaming us, spiritualizing us. In a sense the Faith *is* Christ, "in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. ii., 3.) The more we meditate on it, the more we see that it has no confines: it rises before the mind's eye, splendid and awful, yet entrancingly sweet like a foretaste of Heaven. For the Faith is Christ, and Christ is the Word, and the Word is the Beatific Vision.

Rev. P. M. Northcote.

KANT AND THE PROOFS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

THERE can be little doubt that the two forces which, in modern times, have done most to confuse men's minds on the vital question of religion, are agnosticism and the theory of evolution. Of the former Kant is the progenitor—indeed the protagonist; of the latter—as all the world knows—Charles Darwin is the *principium et fons*. All the sneers of Voltaire, all the vaporings of Diderot, all the air castles of Rousseau, all the hate of the Encyclopedists, have been but so many passing storms—violent tornadoes, if you will, but yet passing, and without any real lasting effects. Hume's onslaught on miracles and the philosophy of cause and effect scarcely survived himself, while the polished periods of Renan, and the atrocities of Strauss are now almost forgotten. The august personality of the Man-God possesses a divine secret charm which renders pointless all the poisoned arrows which these swaggering archers—and their modernist followers—have aimed against His Divinity. The effects of the Kantian philosophy and those of the Darwinian theory alone remain—the fertile sources of unrest and confusion. In spite of all appearances, man is still a rational animal, and any theory of knowledge, or any doctrine of religion, which produces a lasting effect upon his beliefs, must have at least an apparent foundation in reason, or a plausible scientific basis. The heated effervescences of ardent sentiment soon evaporate with the enthusiasm which gave them birth. In order to be even of comparative duration, error must entrench itself behind at least a show of philosophy or an appearance of science. With all his mental vagaries, it seems man must have, for a haven and refuge, reason—or its counterfeit. We are too near the outbreak of the Darwinian dementia to form an accurate estimate of the damage it has done. Insanities and inanities—to use a Huxleyan phrase—have swelled to immense dimensions. Featherheads have been sent flying into all sorts of eccentric orbits. Men who are incapable of forming opinions for themselves and who take their thought from others are swept completely off their feet by the bustle and noisy clamor. The unstable and unthinking have lost their balance and are buffeted about by the winds of uncertainty. The din of the camp followers of evolution they take for argument, or science,

or fact; while the heirs of Darwin and those who imagine they are carrying on his work—men without learning, without knowledge, without science, without judgment, without talent, without any of the equipment necessary in leaders of thought—still endeavor to keep up the false excitement for the sake of the cause. But no progress in science is being made. There is not a single step in advance. Men who would hardly be able to recognize a real fact when they saw it, or give an intelligent opinion on its significance, maintain the hubbub and frighten the rabble into a species of doubt and unbelief. All, however, is but superficial and must of necessity be shortlived. With Kant the effects are much more lasting. They have come down from the eighteenth century even to our time. His sophistry is arrayed, not in the garb of science, but of philosophy, and philosophy in its most mysterious form—metaphysic. To his contemporaries he seemed to have staged a real earthquake. His incantations were deep and far-reaching, and he succeeded so well in wrapping them up in mystery that few of his followers were able to uncloak the imposture. Indeed it is doubtful if conjurer ever succeeded so well in deceiving his disciples. His self-assurance, his perfect confidence in his own powers, his posturings, his solemn pronouncements in the name of reason, his air of perfect infallibility, his sublime and lofty mission, as he called it, his transcendentalisms, of so many kinds, his complete mastery of the whole realm of reason (as he claimed), his extraordinary flights into the hitherto unexplored kingdom of metaphysics,—all surrounded him with a prestige unequaled in the history of philosophy, and men began to be of an opinion that to question his doctrines was little short of philosophic sacrilege. *Laudatus a laudato viro,* Lord Chesterfield told his son, was the highest form of all praise; and one is astounded on reading the encomiums of Kant by so many men, themselves eminent and renowned. In philosophy at least, it is certain that no man who ever lived succeeded so completely in duping his disciples, and it is really a question whether Kant's powers of incantation were not carried so far as even to deceive himself. Even in our day some countries in Europe are still under the spell of Kant; while everywhere, otherwise scholarly men are to be found who firmly believe that Kant has given us the last word in philosophy and metaphysic. The reason is not far to seek. Metaphysic, of its very nature, is the most obscure of sciences. Its demonstrations at best are difficult to the ordinary intellect. But Kant multiplies the difficulties. He is ever hovering on the border of mystery. His language is always the most obscure possible. He deliberately avoided illustration, and by means of a preposterous and revolting jargon he wraps his thoughts in fourfold obscurity. He makes

no secret of this. In fact he even boasts of it in his preface to his preposterous work. He admits his obscurity. He defends his abstruseness. And of deliberate purpose he avoids all attempt to render his thought intelligible. Indeed this seems to be part of his method. He veils his thoughts in such verbiage that one is reminded of the pagan priests who awed their followers into obedience and worship by the mystery with which they surrounded their religious rites. There can be no doubt that he adopted this method with full deliberation and with a real purpose. One is surprised to find so intelligent a writer as Max Muller, his most successful translator, candidly confessing that it is only on the fourth or fifth reading one can begin to understand the Critique of Pure Reason. Schiller and Schopenauer, not only followers, but idolators, of Kant, acknowledged that it was only after successive readings they could grasp his meaning. Quite possibly, on the principle of *ignotum pro magnifico,* this obscurity may be the reason why the sinister and baneful influence of Kant remains.

Throughout nearly a whole decade of generations, prior to Kant, the great question, not of philosophy but of the philosophers, was: How to overthrow scholasticism. From the time of the so-called reformation, the warfare against the scholastic philosophy was open, bitter, virulent, unceasing. Leader after leader in the realm of thought, general after general led his forces against the entrenched citadel. Hatred, vituperation, scorn, derision, contempt—these were the weapons which, in vain, were leveled against the walls of the impregnable fortress. Plato and Aristotle, as the precursors of Augustine and Anselm, Aquinas and Scotus, came in too for their share of the obloquy. There was no indignity of language too foul to be hurled at the hated and despised enemy. But all in vain. At last all the venom and hatred seemed to find its culmination in the scheme of Kant. It was only when he assumed the leadership and took command of the forces of thought that the dethronement of the enemy seemed to be assured, and it was only when he gave to the world his famous Critique of Pure Reason that men began to breathe freely, to assure themselves that the work was at last done, and that the pagan philosophers of the eighteenth century felt that they might now put back their swords in their scabbards and turn their spears into pruning hooks; for now Kant had defined the limits of human reason, assigned to it its proper and only legitimate sphere, curbed its false claims and pretensions, so that to use his own phrase "men might live in peace for ever after." It is true that in his supreme effort, Kant completely overshot the mark; for, in his attempt to overthrow Catholic philosophy, he was obliged to

dislocate all supernatural religion. But so desperate were men's minds and so intent were they on the purpose for which they had striven so long in vain, that, in their enthusiasm, they failed to perceive that in his strenuous endeavors, Kant had damaged Protestantism even more than Catholicity. It was only when the enthusiasm had subsided, that men began to realize that their vaunted victory was really after all but a Pyrrhic one.

Kant's scheme was an ambitious one, and it was as comprehensive as it was ambitious. Its end and object involved a new and elaborate program. All philosophy must be recast in an entirely new channel. All the world's wisdom must be again placed in the retort. New tests must be applied to ascertain its true value. All alloy must be resolutely consumed in the fire of true criticism and only the true gold of human knowledge allowed to remain. And for this, it must be admitted, Kant constructed the most marvelous philosophical machinery the world has ever seen. We do not intend here to go into a detail of the Kantian system; but merely to call attention to the fact that his entire philosophy was elaborated for the express purpose of excluding the supernatural from the domain of knowledge altogether, and to dismiss all cosmological problems as wholly outside the field of knowledge, and hence, not capable of human consideration or discussion. His entire system of metaphysics was constructed especially for the purpose of showing the inability of the human mind to reach the supersensible. The staging and scaffolding as well as the structure itself all have the same objective—the exclusion from the field of knowledge of the supersensible. But not content with all this he had resolved that he must completely discredit the proofs for the existence of the Supreme Being, and thus rigidly exclude God from the field of human knowledge. It is with his efforts in this especial field that this article is engaged.

For the purpose of expelling from the domain of human knowledge the notion of God, Kant looked around him for a proper place in which to posit the philosophical fulcrum on which to rest his metaphysical lever to overturn the universe, and finally decided that his *Pou Sto* must be the existence of God. The schoolmen had given to the world irrefragable proofs that a necessary cause and a supreme ruler of the world there must be. Their arguments were strong, forcible, conclusive. They showed that the world must have had a cause and that its order postulated a supreme intelligence. The cosmological argument, the ontological argument, the teleological argument made a convincing appeal to human reason. Each alone carried with it a powerful force of conviction which it was hard to resist. But all taken together constituted

a formidable bulwark against the assaults of atheism. Even the old pagan philosophy of Greece and Rome found itself compelled to recognize the validity of this line of reasoning. The idea of a Supreme Being as the cause of the world had obtained possession of men's minds in every age of the world's history, and even the untutored savage was not without his conviction that he was subject to a higher power who ruled and governed things with absolute dominion. This, then, must be the point of attack. But how meet the difficulty? What military tactics could be brought into play with any hope of success? A direct attack would be sheer folly. These truths were too deeply embedded in the minds of men to be dislodged by the play of any random artillery. The human mind was too logical to give up its cherished truths for palpable sophistry; and sophistry it certainly must be, that would undertake by the force of reason to shake the foundations of a conviction so firmly established on logical principles. And here it was that the perverted genius of Kant came into play. Was it necessary that the sophistry should be so palpable? Was there not an ancient Eleatic philosopher who could prove and disprove any proposition in the same breath? His arguments for and against carried equal conviction. It is true that Zeno was severely reprimanded by Plato for the sophistry of his subtle dialectics. But Plato and Zeno were dead and there seemed to be no reason why a philosopher of the eighteenth century should not try his skill in the juggler's art. The cause was an exalted one and it was well worth trying. Why not give sophistry a veneer of reasoning and so disguise it as to be beyond recognition? And to give the coup an unparalleled audacity, why not start with reason itself? Surely here was an enterprise worthy of the genius of Kant. Investigate reason itself, challenge it, dissect it, analyze it—see what could be made of it—find out whether it could not be made to lend itself to the deception. Outlawry! Yes, that was the magic word! There lay the road to success. Declare all supersensible questions as outlaws entirely beyond the powers of reason. Reason could not solve them; hence it was entirely outside its sphere when it undertook to discuss such problems at all. But in order to accomplish this, there must be a complete revolution in the realm of philosophy. This, in turn, called for an entire reconstruction of the whole problem of man's knowledge—a tearing down and building up anew from the very foundations. A Herculean task truly! But Kant was not dismayed.

Could not be himself recast the whole structure of human thought, put the whole mass of human knowledge again into the melting pot, remould it in an entirely new fashion, lay down its laws, frame

its legislation, establish its guiding principles, in such a way as to exclude forever from the consideration of human reason the troublesome cosmological problems which were forever disturbing the peaceful serenity of human learning by their persistent clamor for a solution at its hands. Bundle the whole clamorous tribe out of court altogether and let philosophers live in peace, henceforth and forever. Leave no room in the new structure for these problems at all, and the question is solved. And Kant assumed the gigantic undertaking with a jauntiness and a confidence unparalleled in the history of the human mind. The timbering of the mighty structure on his entirely new and unknown plan was a mere holiday sport in view of the golden goal which he saw in the distance and which was to render his name immortal. And surely enough the task was in due time accomplished. All the vast and stupendous machinery had been removed. And there stood the singular edifice before the world in its extraordinary proportions, its grotesque columns, huge unwieldy buttresses, its rambling stairways and galleries, and, above all, with its crowning glory the exclusion of the supersensible for which it was especially designed. The world gazed in astonishment and bewilderment and it has been gazing in astonishment and bewilderment ever since. Not a few, it is true, have pretended to be edified, and a certain number of his admirers showed a disposition not to be satisfied with anything short of Kant's apotheosis; but the midsummer madness has passed out of existence and sober second thought has led the less emotional among them to reconsider the grounds of their idolatry which they have concluded was greatly exaggerated and to some extent hysterical. The illusion, it is true, has not altogether vanished; and in many cases "the spell of Kant," as it has been styled, still retains its charm. But all this strange vast structure was erected for the express purpose of removing from even the most remote contact with reason every question of the supernatural—in brief to shut out God from the region of philosophy altogether; and there it still stands, a challenge to every lover of philosophic truth. It is not the intention here to undertake to pull down the weird edifice, or at all to assail the main structure. To cover all the points in the new metaphysic would require a treatise; but fortunately this is not necessary; for Kant, apparently not satisfied with constructing his extraordinary God-proof fortress, to make assurance doubly sure, has been at pains to hack to pieces, as well, every vehicle of thought that might possibly be used to frustrate his own main purpose—in other words (to dismiss metaphor), he applied all his extraordinary powers directly and especially to the

task of refuting the arguments for the existence of God. It is this latter labor that shall engage our attention in this article.

Kant himself puts the arguments for the existence of God with tolerable fairness. Here are some of his admissions:

"If we admit the existence of something, whatever it may be, we must also admit that something exists by necessity. For the contingent exists only under the condition of something else as its cause, and from this the same conclusion leads us on till we reach a cause which is not contingent, and therefore unconditionally necessary. This is the argument on which reason founds its progress towards an original being."

Kant then proceeds to tell us how reason begins

"to look out for the concept of a being worthy of such a distinction as the unconditioned necessity of its existence . . . in order to find out among all concepts of possible things one which has nothing incompatible with absolute necessity. For that something absolutely must exist, is regarded as certain after the first conclusion. And after discarding everything else, as incompatible with that necessity, reason takes the one being which remains for the absolutely necessary being."

And he concludes that

"the concept of a being of the highest reality *(ens realissimum)* would therefore seem of all concepts of all possible things to be the most compatible with the concept of an unconditionally necessary being. . . . This therefore is the natural course of human reason. It begins by *persuading* itself of the existence of *some* necessary being. In this being it recognizes unconditioned existence. It then seeks for the concept of that which is independent of all condition, and finds it in that which is itself the sufficient condition of all other things, that is, in that which contains all reality. Now as the unlimited all is absolute unity, and implies the concept of a being, one and supreme, reason concludes that the Supreme Being, as the original cause of all things, must exist by absolute necessity."

We have italicized two words in the last paragraph in order to call attention to the fact that when Kant seems, with all apparent candor, to be setting forth this argument in all its fulness, he begins at once to be the juggling sophist and endeavors by a simple substitution of terms to weaken the force of the argument which he finds himself compelled to admit. But reason, as Kant well knew, does not begin "by *persuading* itself of the existence of some necessary being"; rather reason finds itself, by the force of its own logical powers, *compelled* to recognize the existence not of "some" necessary being but of *a* necessary being. It is not a question of

persuasion but of compulsion; and it is not a question of *some* but of *a* necessary being; for there is but one, and hence we are without a choice. Although Kant tries *en passant* to neutralize the force of his admissions in various other ways, he is nevertheless forced to say:

"We cannot deny that this argument possesses a certain foundation, when we must come to a decision, that is, when after having once admitted the necessity of some necessary being (mark the *some*), we agree that we must decide where to place it; for in that case we could not make a better choice, or we have really no choice, but are forced to vote for the absolute unity of complete reality, as the source of all possibility."

This reluctant admission which he finds he cannot withhold, he at once hastens to cancel by the preposterous claim that "however we are not forced to come to a decision," and much more of the same sort which need not engage our attention here; for we must hasten on to his great point of attack and meet him in his full and direct assault on the argument which he girds himself so resolutely to overthrow. For him it is a hand to hand conflict—a struggle for life and death; and he resorts to warfare that is desperate and an extremely reckless use of weapons. Yet again, before he dooms the victim to the slaughter, he lingers long enough to tell us:

"This argument, though it is no doubt transcendental, as based on the internal insufficiency of the contingent, is nevertheless so simple and natural, that the commonest understanding accepts it, if once led up to it. We see things arise, change and perish, and these, or at least their state, must therefore have a cause. Of every cause, however, that is given in experience, the same question must be asked. Where, therefore, could we more fairly place the *last* causality, than in that Being, which originally contains in itself the sufficient cause for every possible effect, and the concept of which can be easily realized by the one trait of an all-comprehending perfection? That supreme cause we afterwards consider as absolutely necessary, because we find it absolutely necessary to ascend to it, while there is no ground for going beyond it. Thus among all nations, even when still in a state of blind polytheism, we always see some sparks of monotheism, to which they have been led, not by meditation and profound speculation, but by the natural bent of the common understanding which they gradually followed and comprehended."

And then, in spite of all this, Kant decks himself in his most crimson war paint, snatches up his tomahawk and scalping knife,

announces that no quarter is to be given, and, as a victorious warrior who is always sure of his victim, marches to the conflict, soon to return in triumph, with the scalp of his bleeding victim dangling at his belt, the while his whole tribe joins in the song of victory—the chant of which continues even to the present day.

Kant's attack was direct and instantaneous. The enemy had three heads into a single one, thus disposing of all three at a vainly wished that all his subjects had but one head which he might sever at a single blow, Kant was not long in combining the three heads into a single one, thus disposing of all three at a single stroke. There were three proofs for the existence of God, he announced: "the first proof is the physico-theological; the second, the cosmological; the third, the ontological; there are no more and there can be no more. I shall show" he adds, "that neither on the one path, the empirical, nor on the other, the transcendental, can reason achieve anything, and that it stretches its wings in vain, if it tries to soar beyond the mere world of sense by the mere power of speculation." Kant reverses the order of these proofs beginning with the ontological, but he assembles all three under the head of this one, in order to have the pleasure of accomplishing his purpose at a single blow. This strategy saves time and energy and moreover is much more spectacular, and therefore more likely to draw the acclaim of the multitude which is always spellbound by sleight of hand performances. Indeed it is not impossible that the ease and dexterity with which he performs his gymnastic feats may have imposed on Kant himself. In order to lay bare the tissue of false reasoning by which Kant pretends that he has shown "the impossibility of an ontological proof of the existence of God" it will be necessary to follow him in his tortuous windings through the attenuated atmosphere of transcendental thought, where he has endeavored to conceal his sophisms, by sailing at such a height above the heads of the multitude as to baffle discovery of his fallacies, and confuse and bewilder the ordinary worker in the field of everyday philosophy. In the rare atmosphere of transcendentalism an intellectual twilight could be easily created where glaring fallacies might not be so apparent. We could, of course, as has been said before, show the utterly absolutely worthless foundations on which he has built his entire structure of "metaphysic," and thus let the whole system topple to the ground; but, as the late Professor Huxley (who was by no means an enemy of but rather a sympathizer with the Kantian Critique) well says, "his baggage train is so much bigger than his army" that immense quantities of powder would

be necessary to cover the whole field. It is much simpler to deal with his disproof itself. At the very outset Kant tells us,

"that the concept of an absolutely necessary being is a concept of pure reason, that is, a mere idea, the objective reality of which is by no means proved by the fact that reason requires it."

The question of the objective reality of the concept of the necessary being is the rub of Kant's entire argument on this point. We have here, then, the admission that reason requires the concept of a necessary being—an admission which the sheer force of logic has wrung from Kant at the very outset—although he makes many a frantic effort and has recourse to many a wily strategem to cancel the damning effects of this admission. He adds:

"It seems strange and absurd, however, that a conclusion of an absolutely necessary existence from a given existence in general should seem urgent and correct, and that all the conditions under which the understanding can form a concept of such a necessity should be entirely against us."

This statement has a very plausible appearance until we remember that "all the conditions under which the understanding can form a concept of the necessity," and which are "entirely against us" are by no means the conditions of philosophy in general, but the very conditions which Kant himself has factitiously interposed for the express purpose of being "against us." Should, for instance, Henry Ford or the Ku Klux wizard, wishing to exclude the Hebrew from the right of the American franchise solely on their own recognizance, lay down as conditions under which an American citizen could exercise that right, that he must not bear a Hebrew patronymic, that he must not observe his Sabbath on Saturday, that he must regard swine's flesh as unclean, etc., and then challenge his Jewish neighbor's vote, because all the conditions under which he could exercise the franchise were against him, he would be arguing precisely as Kant argues here. For the conditions were not recognized by anyone except by those without authority, who had framed them and then undertook to enforce them. Kant expressly framed these conditions—which no one recognizes but himself and his followers—and then tries to enforce them as though they were the real law to be followed in the case. Hence all that need be said here regarding Kant's cunning attempt to make it appear that all the conditions of legitimate philosophy are against the admission of this concept of a necessary being (which he himself is forced to confess is "urgent and correct") is, that these conditions must first get themselves approved by philosophy before they can become operative against anything, and that from the very outset they must fall under

suspicion, since they were introduced by Kant for the sinister purpose of debarring the necessary being from the right of recognition; and that in spite of all Kant's gigantic labors for the purpose of excluding it, the concept of this absolutely necessary being, like Banquo's ghost, will not down, but is so absolutely necessary for the scheme of things that it cannot by any possibility be excluded. The necessity of its recognition is therefore as absolute as its necessity for the existence of the universe. And, in spite of himself, Kant is forced to acknowledge this necessity, if we are to have a universe at all.

Kant then proceeds to define this concept (which he has vainly tried to commit to non-existence) as "something, the non-existence of which is impossible." But again alarmed at the force of his own testimony, he tries to break the force of his own words by telling us:

"This, however, does not make us much wiser with reference to the conditions that make it necessary to consider the non-existence of a thing as absolutely inconceivable. It is these conditions which we want to know," etc.

Here again Kant tries the trick of raising a little dust to blind us to the real question. But with all due deference to his extraordinary powers of prestidigitation, it is not "these conditions which we want to know." What we want to know is, whether or no, we must consider the non-existence of this necessary being, which Kant is forced to admit, as "absolutely inconceivable." The "conditions" under which this knowledge is forced upon us is of far less importance to philosophy than the *fact* that its non-existence is inconceivable. That is the supreme question and metaphysics and philosophy both are at one in the ringing answer that the non-existence of the necessary being *is* absolutely inconceivable. Kant's sly ruse to throw the reader's mind off the track, by raising irrelevant issues, is to no purpose. That these sallies are but a mere species of reynard's tricks to throw his pursuers off the scent, is evident from the ridiculous dispute among his followers about the context as to whether Kant in the above definition used the word "necessary" or the word "impossible," each destructive of the other, it being evidently a matter of indifference to his interpreters and to his text, whether he wrote "the conditions that make it necessary" or "the conditions that make it impossible," to consider the non-existence of a thing as absolutely inconceivable. Usually the words "necessary" and "impossible" are regarded not as synonyms but as antonyms; we are now, however, within the realm of metaphysics—and Kantian metaphysics at that—where things are not always what they seem. All this, however, is but preliminary skirmishing on the part of

Kant and we have called attention to it merely to show that Kant never hesitates to have recourse to deliberate sophistry when it serves his purpose.

The next step in the famous disproof is Kant's assault on that fortress of logical truth commonly known as "logical necessity." Logical necessity in its various forms and disguises has ever stood as the bulwark of philosophic truth. In all departments of human thought logical necessity has been the respected power to which all disputations bowed. From it there has never been an appeal. No one of approved sanity has ever dared to question its authority, to deny its force, or to stand up for even a moment against it. It has always been regarded as the court from which there could be no possible appeal. *Roma lucuta est, causa finita est* was not more decisive for the devout ultramontane than was the verdict of logical necessity for the philosopher who knew anything about the principles of truth and error—that is, until Kant came. But in his blind zeal for the overthrow of scholasticism, Kant seems to have flung all caution to the winds and to have rushed madly into a wild and reckless determination, at any cost, to accomplish his purpose. He takes his firelock in hand, resolutely closes his eyes to consequences, and madly fires in all directions, utterly regardless whether it is truth or falsehood, friend or foe is struck down in the wild encounter. What matters it if profound and vital truths are trampled on in the mad riot, if only he can claim to have demolished something? We doubt if ever demented man rushed so madly on a wild and reckless career of indiscriminate slaughter, or with such an utter contempt of results, or of truth. These are strong words, but we have already seen some of Kant's methods which, however, are but a slight foretaste of the unmitigated boldness with which he undertakes to browbeat philosophy into an acceptance of his sophisms.

The argument from effect to cause, as we have seen, was too palpable to be trifled with. The logical necessity which demands a necessary cause for the universe no man in his senses could undertake to gainsay. There it stood, this philosophical fortress, like a rock of adamant, against which the waves of sophistry had hitherto beaten in vain. Kant perceives this insurmountable obstacle in his path, and, by fair means or foul, is determined to get rid of it. In a happy moment it occurred to him that this necessary cause never came into the realm of human experience. It was not, like the external world, within the range of our senses. Neither was it possible of approach by way of the internal sense. Never, in this life, could it be brought within the range of experience, either actual or possible. It never became tangible at all except through

thought and reasoning from thought. It was after all but an idea, and an idea that never could be realized in any experience. Why then not outlaw it? Eureka! The answer is found! Why not confine the necessary being to the realm of concepts—and empty concepts at that? Why not *imprison* it therefore where it would give little trouble to Kant and his school, and forbid it ever to appear beyond the boundaries of the mere idea (which is objectless); and since it never could appear to plead its own cause in the court of experience, why not declare it an outlaw in the realms of philosophy and knowledge? Why indeed? And, strange to say, the fraud has succeeded so well that no one since Kant's day has been found to challenge the justice of his high-handed proceeding. Admitted, he says, that the full force of logical necessity compels us to accept the existence of a necessary cause of the world, and hence a necessary being; all this is merely in thought, and thought does not give or prove the existence of the thing.

He tell us, "All those pretended examples are taken without exception from *judgments* only, not from things, and their existence. Now the unconditioned necessity of judgments is not the same as the absolute necessity of things. The absolute necessity of a judgment is only a conditioned necessity of the thing, or of the predicate in judgment. The above (which he has used as an example) did not say that three angles were absolutely necessary, but that under the condition of the existence of a triangle, three angles are given (in it) by necessity. Nevertheless this pure logical necessity has exerted so powerful an illusion, that after having formed of a thing a concept *a priori* so constituted that it seemed to include existence in its sphere, people thought they could conclude with certainty, that, because existence necessarily belongs to the object of that concept, provided always that I accept the thing as given (existing), its existence also must necessarily be accepted (according to the rule of identity' and that the being therefore must itself be absolutely necessary, because its existence is implied in a concept, which is accepted voluntarily only, and always under the condition that I accept the object of it, as given."

This, then, is the Kantian view of logical necessity. Aside from the too palpable trickery or knavery in the concluding words, the argument at first blush would seem to carry some force, and has a certain air of plausibility. Let us treat it fairly and with the candor and honesty which it does not deserve. To the ordinary reader who does not take the pains to go beneath the surface, the argument that the necessity which compels reason to admit a necessary being is entirely psychological, and that the necessity of an unconditioned

being from which all things proceed is "taken from judgments and not from things" might seem altogether reasonable. It also sounds quite plausible that, since it is in thought only that we arrive at the conclusion of a necessary being, and not in experience, the argument for its existence loses its efficacy and fails to prove that a necessary being actually exists. To use the language of the street, the concept of the necessary being does not "deliver the goods." It never brings into experience this necessary being, so that we make its acquaintance. It gives us the concept; it does not give us the thing. Translated from the Kantese dialect, that is the real meaning of Kant's argument here. Kant prided himself on the subtlety of his distinction. He boasted of his perspicacity in perceiving this distinction. And his followers have regarded it as the crowning glory of all philosophical greatness. Let us then examine this marvel of Kantian achievement.

Kant says "the unconditioned necessity of a judgment is not the same as the absolute necessity of things." Now, in the name of all the Kantian categories, what is it that compels reason to regard a thing as absolutely necessary? What is it that in mathematics compels the mind to accept the conclusion if it be not "the absolute necessity of the judgment"? What is it that compels the mind to accept the conclusion that the whole is greater than its parts; that a triangle must have three angles; that the square of the hypothenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides, if it be not the absolute necessity of the judgment? The fact is, that there is not a single conclusion in natural science, in philosophy, in mathematics, that is of any value, which carries with it anything like apodictic judgment, that is not forced upon us by the absolute necessity of the judgment and by the absolute necessity of the judgment only. And what is more, if we take away this absolute—apodictic —certainty of the judgment, and its necessity, we take away all ground for certainty of belief in the conclusion; and without the judgment's express sanction no man will be willing to accept the conclusion. Hence if we take away the absolute necessity of the judgment, we at the same time take away the absolute certainty of the thing.

Again, such is the nature of a logical necessity that it never fails. It is the seal which always give sterling value to a conclusion. The needle does not point to the pole with more unfailing accuracy than a logical necessity points to truth. This is a rule which admits of no exception. Were it to fail in any one case, its extraordinary power were lost forever. When the necessities of logic—honest logic which every honest man is able to recognize at a glance—call for a decision,

and judgment is pronounced by reason, not as a mere opinion, or a probability, but as an absolute certainty, because, by the laws of reason, the necessity of the mind demands it, no man in his senses dares to question the validity of that conclusion. Kant himself understands this fully and finds himself forced to recognize it. In fact, he could not move many paces in his metaphysic if he attempted to deny or ignore it. Throughout the whole realm of logic, throughout the whole field of philosophy, throughout the whole world of thought, the infallible potency of the logical necessity reigns supreme. No one ever before Kant thought of questioning it. But if Kant's argument has any value, there is, and must be, a case where the principle of the logical necessity is an absolute failure. There is not in the whole realm of thought an instance where the voice of logical necessity speaks out in more ringing tones, proclaiming the absolute necessity of its judgment, than in the argument that the world cannot have made itself, and that for all things that exist there must be a necessary cause—or, what Kant himself calls a necessary being. Yet here in the most conspicuous and illustrious case of its application, Kant tells us it proves false; it deceives us. He says there is no necessary being. It exists only in our thought. He boldly challenges its validity. He tells us in effect that here logical necessity fails, that in following it we are following a mere illusion, and thus he undermines the very foundations of all apodictic certainty. That Kant was wholly unconscious of this difficulty we are quite willing to believe. In fact, we are forced to believe this rather than suppose that he deliberately stultified himself. In his insane and reckless efforts to overthrow scholasticism he has, however, completely overreached himself. He has placed himself on the horns of a dilemma from which nothing can possible rescue him. For either the logical necessity here is efficacious or it is not. The existence of a necessary being as the cause of all things, which reason forces upon us as a logical necessity, must be either affirmed or denied. Its necessity is shown by the logical demands of reason. Without it reason will not rest satisfied. This concept of a necessary being which reason forces upon us, then, has objective validity or it has not. If it has, Kant's contention is at an end, for he simply commits an intellectual suicide and all his vaporous claims are not worth the smoke engendered; whereas, on the other hand, if there be no object behind the concept, and the logical necessity is merely a voice crying in the wilderness, he undermines all apodictic certainty by placing a stick of dynamite beneath the very principle on which all certainty of this nature rests; for he calls in question the very axiom of reason upon which certainty depends, and proclaims to the world that apodictically

certain conclusions are no longer to be trusted. Hence the sheet anchor of knowledge is gone; and Kant, as far as in him lies, has destroyed the entire value of all the valid conclusions of reason. Given one instance in which this indispensable principle of reason fails, and you have made it absolutely worthless for every other purpose. It cannot be depended upon. It is not to be trusted. For if it is so urgent and insistent (in accordance with all the laws of reason) in its information that there is and must be a necessary being as the cause of all things, and on the other hand, as Kant assures us, this being is not real at all, but merely a figment of reason, which must be wholly disregarded, where are we to look for certainty since all the *a priori* principles of knowledge fail us? If this principle rings true in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases, but in the thousandth rings false, it must be flung aside as a worthless instrument of knowledge. It is not a little strange that Kant did not foresee this and realize that his arbitrary distrust of reason, here, imperiled the usefulness of this, the soundest of all philosophical principles. But we surmise that, as Kant had nothing whatever of sound reason to warrant him in treating reason so cavalierly on this point, he was so completely blinded by his prejudice that he did not see the consequences; or, that, seeing them, he determined to deliberately ignore them.

But, to some extent, Kant's objection has somewhat the nature of a boomerang. For it can be retorted on Kant that he actually furnishes the strongest kind of proof against his own system of philosophy. For if in his new boasted metaphysic, the principle of a logical necessity does not fit in (whereas throughout the whole realm of thought it has never before been known to fail), so that no one before Kant had ever dreamt of questioning its validity, the presumption must be that, since the principle is valid everywhere else while in Kant's system he tells us it completely fails, the difficulty is not with the principle but with Kant's system of philosophy. For, in reality, this principle is a touchstone of the truth or falsity of a system. Hence when Kant claims that it is not workable in his system, but only produces results totally different from those which it invariably produces elsewhere, it devolves on Kant to show why it is not his philosophy rather than the principle of logical necessity that has been discredited; and if he fails, as he certaintly does and must, to show this, all the more firmly does the ontological proof for the existence of God stand unshaken. Kant calls the idea of the necessary being a concept (or an idea, if you will, for he calls it both) of pure reason. Now in every other instance, without any exception, in which reason requires a pure concept and insists on bring-

ing it into the realm of dialectics, so that it is admitted, discussed, recognized, properly allocated, that concept has objective validity. The only instance where objective validity is denied to a concept of this kind is where Kant denies it to the concept of the necessary being. Every other concept of pure reason has a corresponding object which is never called in question. Kant's vaporings that those objects are to be met with in experience, is wholly beside the question. Whether the objects of these concepts are or are not to be met with in experience, has nothing to do with the case. That they are met with in experience does indeed prove the validity of the concept, but it by no means proves that in cases where the object does not come into experience that object does not exist. It shows that there are cases where experience can prove the validity of these concepts, but it does not prove that where the objects do not come into experience their objective validity is lacking. Kant's theory that these concepts are intended only for experience he has by no means proved; and all his desperate attempts at proofs are lamentable failures. Hence, if, in every other instance, the concept of logical necessity works with unerring precision—and it is by no means a mere experiment that is placed on trial, but is itself the very keeper and master of the fortress of reason—the fact that it fails to function and produce its object in the Kantian system—which is merely an experimenter asking for a trial—proves nothing whatever against the objective validity of the concept of the necessary being, but at once brings discredit on the Kantian experiment. Not only that, but it brings the whole Kantian experiment under the suspicion that it is not constructed on sound philosophical principles—to say nothing whatever of the failure of Kant's philosophy to furnish a proper deduction of his categories. The whole subject may be summed up thus: Here is an old established principle of reason which has never been brought in question by any philosopher of any school, nay without which any system of human knowledge is utterly impossible. It works with the utmost precision alike in philosophy, in science, in metaphysic. It never slips a cog. And then comes Kant with a brand new, untried and unproved system of human reason, devised especially for the purpose of discrediting the old established principle, and because the oil and water will not mingle, Kant immediately cries "I told you so" and claims that the old established principle must be discarded and his own installed instead—regardless of the other false consequences which follow on the substitution. Shall we say the fault lies with the old infallible principle—or with the newcomer with which it will not work? Kant assures us the difficulty lies with the

old reliable principle which is as sure as the sun in the heavens; the world will, however, have its own opinion—which can hardly fail to be the true one—viz., that the fault is wholly with the usurper which has promised so much and given nothing but doubt. The only verdict must be that the newcomer is an impostor. The would-be-usurper relies on claims that are altogether spurious; the Kantian system fails. Here is the true test of its sufficiency or insufficiency —the touchstone which determines real value. By this test it is discredited. It completely fails. The preposterous claims of Kant for the scope of his categories are at once swept away by the very simple fact that, according to Kant himself, they are at variance with the very essence of all logic.

These, however, are by no means the only difficulties which Kant must overcome, if he wishes to establish the efficacy of his contention. He tells us that the concept of a necessary being is invalid for the reason that the object of that concept can never be met in any experience. But whence, then, have we the concept? It is imperative that Kant should clearly explain this, if the concept has, as he maintains, no objective validity. In Kant's system, the pure concepts of the understanding are forms or moulds of the mind which lie inoperative until their object is presented to them by the senses. Without this sensibility and its contact with the object we would never even know that we were in possession of these concepts at all. Kant himself says these concepts have "their first germs and beginnings in the human understanding in which they lie prepared, till at last, on the occasion of experience, they become developed" and are brought into activity. What is more, he tells us that "no concept is ever referred to an object immediately, but to some other representation of it"; so that we may regard those blind concepts as wholly inoperative until they are brought into contact, immediate or mediate, with their object. Hence a concept such as that of a necessary being is the joint product, as it were, of the form that lies hidden in the understanding and the object which is presented to it, and by which it is aroused, so to speak, from its dormant or passive state and becomes active. Now if there be no object to correspond with the concept of the necessary being, as Kant maintains, and by which the passive concept becomes active, whence do we derive the notion of a necessary being with which Kant claims we are all so familiar? This notion is universal—even necessary. It is to be met with everywhere in spite of the fact that Kant tells us it is merely a blind concept without an object. Kant says, "people have at all times been talking of an absolutely necessary being." He also tells us that "no doubt a verbal definition of that concept is quite easy!"

If, then, people are so familiar with the concept that they have always been talking about it; and if the definition of it is quite easy, and yet, according to Kant, it is wholly without an object to correspond with the concept, from what source have "people" derived their knowledge of it? How has the world become so familiar with it? This is a paradox which needs elucidation. If this concept be out of the reach of reason, and if its object cannot be given, it is passing strange that "people" have always been so familiar with it, that "people have been at all times talking about" it, and that a definition of it is "quite easy." All this implies an acquaintance with the object, an easy familiarity with it, and a clearly definite knowledge of it; and yet Kant tells us that it is without objective validity of any kind! In every other instance in which reason postulates a necessary concept, that concept has a corresponding object which can be reached by the senses, by intuition, by deduction, so that it becomes manifest that the object is really there and hence the idea in the mind is not, to use a Kant phrase, a mere empty concept. This is true of all logical necessity. But if this be true—and there is no denying it—there must be somewhere in the universe an object which corresponds to the concept of the necessary being; and if Kant persists in maintaining the contrary, it devolves upon him to show that there is here an exception, and also to satisfactorily demonstrate to reason why it should be an exception. It is much more consonant with reason—and, indeed, with the laws of common sense—to say that the object is there—must be there—though we do not perceive it, than to say that where the principle is most urgent and the necessity is greatest, the thing which is demanded most peremptorily by the necessity, is absent. Who is the more likely to have made the mistake? Kant or nature? For to say that we have this concept of the necessary being—and this is absolutely unquestionable—but for no other purpose than that of mere ornament, would be to bring suspicion on all Kant's categories; for we would thus have an empty concept without an object or without hope of one. There is only one alternative to all this absurdity, viz., that since it is only in Kant's system of metaphysic we are confronted with such a monstrous absurdity, his system must be absolutely false. As, according to Kant, all concepts are inoperative until they come into contact with their object, and are hidden away and unperceived until the object calls them into activity, it devolves on Kant to explain how and why this particular concept of a necessary being is an exception to the rule, and although, according to him, it has no objective validity, why it should nevertheless be called into such irrepressible and enduring activity.

It is really difficult to absolve Kant from the charge of trickery

and even sheer knavery in his manner of dealing with this problem. His skill in metaphysical jugglery is sufficiently attested in his famous swaggering antinomies. In the antinomies, however, it is mere sleight-of-hand performance for the benefit of the galleries, and the pastime injures no one. But here, where the principles of all truth are at stake, we have even a more glaring example of his reckless artifice. He admits the absolute necessity of the necessary being. Reason, he admits, demands it. Without it the whole chain of reasoning and also of existence sinks into the abyss. Without a necessary cause of the universe, the whole structure of thought and things collapses. Try as we may we cannot avoid the necessity of the necessary being. It is a logical necessity. Reason cannot rest at ease without it. Unless it is admitted, the understanding will not and cannot be content. Convinced of its absolute necessity and realizing how indispensable it is in the courts of human reason, the mind sets out in quest of information concerning it. It endeavors to obtain some notion of what it looks like. It would draw its portrait. It wants its photograph. It uses all the means which ingenuity can devise to catch a glimpse of it. It figures to itself all that the concept of a necessary being can suggest in order to represent to itself what may be the characteristics and qualities of this necessary being. It decides that it must have absolute reality. It must be the *ens reale,* aye, even the *ens realissimum.* It is forced to concede that it must the *ens summum* (the highest being); that it must be the *ens originarium* (the original being); the *ens entium* (the being of beings). All this, Kant has figured out, with mathematical precision and with great satisfaction to himself, the necessary being must be. Nay more, he shows that it is entitled to the name of necessary being, for he demonstrates fully its absolute necessity. He says it is:

". . . the complete possession of all reality. It is a transcendental *ideal* which forms the foundation of the complete determination which is necessary for all that exists, and which constitutes at the same time the highest and complete condition of its possibility, to which all thoughts of objects, with regard to their content, must be traced back. It is at the same time the only true ideal of which human reason is capable, because it is in this case alone that a concept of a thing, which in itself is general, is completely determined by itself, and recognized as the representation of an individual."

And yet, in spite of all this investigation by reason and its unquestionable results, he insists that reason must relinquish all its claims to any knowledge whatever of this necessary being, because we do not meet with the object of the concept in experience. That is, the

same faculty of reason which has so conclusively demonstrated its existence, which has taken its portrait, and which proves that without it we can know nothing whatever of phenomena, must be resolutely excluded from all knowledge—or even recognition—of that being. It must relinquish all its pretensions to acquaintance of any kind with the necessary being whose legitimate claims it has so conclusively established. The necessary being must be banished wholly from the entire territory over which reason holds sway. Although the conviction of its necessity is persistent and absolute, its existence must be ignored. It must be excluded from all experience, although without it there would be no such thing as experience. It must not claim recognition either in the internal or in the external world, although it is frankly admitted that without it there would be neither internal nor external world. Kant catalogued his categories and so manipulated them that they must absolutely exclude the supernatural. Unlike Aristotle, who first investigated the *a priori* possessions of the human mind, that is, the whole content of the mind prior to experience, Kant insists that some one—doubtless the rejected necessary being—placed in the mind at the very outset certain forms or moulds into which all the experience of the senses and all intuitions must be poured and thus moulded into the forms which we call knowledge. It is only experience, however, that can have this privilege. Nothing that does not come within the range of experience can have the honor. Phenomena, by your leave, and phenomena only, are entitled to admission tickets. These moulds—which are so choice in the selection of their guests—are by no means figurative with Kant. They are real —genuine—"compartments" into which phenomena are poured in a constant stream and out of which these same phenomena emerge to us in the form of judgments, knowledge, etc. But the necessary being not being a phenomenon or phenomena is rigorously denied the luxury of the moulding process. Therefore about the necessary being, in spite of all that we know about it, we can know nothing. Now this mental rigging which Kant has been at such pains to invent and on which he has spent so much time and labor, as he tells us, is surely a marvel of mental industry. We have no room here to examine it in detail, nor does it come within the scope of this article to do more than point out the main blunder which would give to philosophy a gigantic metaphysical blimp, inflated to an extraordinary degree, instead of the sure and simple teachings of philosophers of every school up to Kant's time. All his lumbering machinery which fills so large a space in his impossible system of metaphysic, and on which he prided himself so much, is but a hallucinated distortion of the very simple fact that the human mind is endowed with the capacity

to acquire knowledge—a capacity which has been recognized in every age by every philosopher of every school. The mind of man is pliable, plastic, elastic, and receives and retains impressions from objects in a thousand different ways. But Kant maintains that this mental capacity for knowledge is in reality a piece of metaphysical "carpentry, mechanical if not automatic in its workings, and containing compartments" or "pockets" in which to pigeon-hole the various forms which it is to meet with in the course of experience; there being no compartment left, however, for the knowledge of the necessary being, who, evidently, according to Kant, built a structure with apartments for everything else, but unfortunately seems to have forgotten to save a room for himself. Kant, astute metaphysician that he is, immediately takes advantage of the oversight and insists on excluding the necessary being and all its relations from the field of knowledge altogether. He maintains that since we have no concept of the necessary being that can come into experience, the mind can never obtain any knowledge concerning it. This, of course, is simply a gratuitous attempt on the part of Kant, cavalierly to circumscribe man's mental capacity, to clip the wings of the human understanding, and without warrant of any kind either from reason or experience, to limit arbitrarily the powers of the human mind, of the extent of which neither Kant nor any one else has any knowledge whatever. Kant has simply reversed here the real order of things. True philosophy, however, will easily brush aside all Kant's fantastical trumpery and fling into the rubbish heap all his factitious and worthless mental mechanism, his artificial "moulds," "forms," "compartments," etc., and leave human reason free to take care of itself and adjust itself to whatever kind of knowledge is presented to it, without placing any arbitrary restrictions on its investigations or any limitation on its powers. Perhaps there never was a more preposterous proposition presented to the world than that because the supersensible world is not given to us in experience, that is, that we can never have experience of it while here, the human mind is incapable of arriving at any knowledge concerning it, and that consequently all questions regarding it and all answers to these questions are entirely illegitimate; yet this is not only what Kant claims, but what he wrote his whole system of philosophy to prove. The reverse of all this, however, is the true state of affairs. The soul, of which the understanding is but a faculty, is constructed on no pinchbeck pattern. It is no mere mechanical frame containing dies, "moulds," "forms" and "compartments." It has indeed the faculty of assimilating to itself and acquiring knowledge of the various things which are presented to it by the senses; but this is by no means the extent

of its capacity; and Kant falls into an egregious error when he imagines that the external world is capable of exhausting the powers of the understanding, and, therefore, since this is the only field of observation that is presented to us here, our minds are limited in their capacity by the world of sensibility. Kant's catch phrase is: the understanding is limited by experience. This is about equivalent to saying that the possibilities of a mighty organ are limited by the capacity of a third rate-performer on the instrument, or that a magnificent concert-grand is capable of producing no more majestic music than a tyro can extract from it, and furthermore that it would be wrong, wicked and altogether impious to attempt to draw more harmonies from the superb instrument than a musical clown could produce. But the fact is, not that the powers of the human mind are limited by experience—but that the external world, phenomena, all experience are incapable of exhausting the powers of men's minds. That the understanding is limited by experience is, indeed, to a certain extent true, but not in the sense in which Kant uses it. It is true that here for the most part our minds are confined to experience and taken up with the things we find in experience; but it does not mean and cannot mean that the external world, or experience, is capable of exhausting the resources of the mind or its capacity for knowledge. That this is not a matter of mere theory or conjecture, but a truth established beyond mere peradventure, is evident from the fact that, prior to all experience, as Kant himself admits, the mind is already furnished with *a priori* knowledge which is really the basis on which rests all our knowledge from experience and which alone can give validity to our knowledge derived from experience. Hence, when Kant claims that our knowledge is limited to experience, he is simply contradicting the first principles of all knowledge. The mind can outsoar all experience; for it is certain that the principle of contradiction and the principle of casualty are before all experience, that they are the most valuable possessions of knowledge to which the mind can lay claim, nay, that without them the mind cannot take a single step forward on the road to knowledge. And yet, in the face of all this, Kant will undertake to tell us that the human mind is not capable of any knowledge outside of experience! The extent of the powers of the human mind we do not know, for the reason that we are able to present to it merely the world of phenomena; but whether the mind is or is not capable of understanding and knowing (for that is the sore point with philosophy) a world of a totally different order, were it presented to it, is what neither Kant nor any other philosopher can either affirm or deny. Consequently it was triple-plated brazen assurance in Kant to announce to the world that,

because he had drawn from the depths of his inner consciousness a hairbrained system of metaphysics, specially constructed for the limitation of the powers of the human understanding, all philosophy must come to his terms and then proceed to issue a formal imperial decree that the mind of man, by its very nature and constitution, must be limited in its scope to a knowledge of phenomena and phenomena only, and that this edict must be strictly obeyed. Kant has simply reversed the real order of things. Although he boasted somewhat ostentatiously that he was the Copernicus of philosophy, his theory (or dogmatism, rather) is really reactionary; for he makes the sun of his system move round the earth. He makes the mind with its categories and other paraphernalia revolve around phenomena, mapping and cataloguing it in various ways according to the tables of weights and measures with which Kant has so magisterially provided it. He boldly proclaims that the mind is limited by the phenomena which it finds in experience. It was made for phenomena, for the knowledge of phenomena, and beyond the limits of experience it can never pass. It is a satellite which must revolve around phenomena in the region of experience, but can never be diverted to any other use. But Kant is mistaken. The world is not an instrument on which the human mind manipulates the keys. If this were the case we would be able to change the face of the world at will. If we look deeply into the matter, we shall find—and this is an all important truth—that just as the heavenly bodies seem to move around our earth while our planet remains motionless, so all our investigations of nature and all our impressions received from phenomena, which we proudly dub philosophy, are the action of all this phantasmagoria on our minds which are all the time stationary while they are receiving the impressions. The human mind is seated like the sphinx by the roadside and the phantasms pass by in endless procession presenting their problems to it for solution. But whether, if another procession of phenomena of an entirely different order, of which we have now no comprehension, were to replace that which now engages us, the mind would be able to grasp it as fully as it now grasps the world of sense, is a problem to which Kant seems to answer an emphatic "No," but to which the rest of the world will answer just as emphatically "Yes." To return to our metaphor, the mind is the mighty organ. The external world—or experience, if you will—is the performer. That there are yet stops in the mighty organ which experience—all phenomena—have never drawn but which could mayhap reveal to us other worlds of harmony and knowledge Kant can neither prove nor disprove. The deep majestic bourdon of the principles

of cause and contradiction have not been drawn by experience. They were making their music when experience came into play and they have been resounding through its music ever since. Consequently the extent to which the powers of the mind can be attuned, or the limits of its flexibiliy to the requirements of knowledge, is something about which neither Kant nor any one else is qualified to dogmatise. Hence the absurdity of Kant in his herculean attempts to limit the boundaries of knowledge by the phenomena of experience!

We have already alluded to Kant's method of dealing with the idea of the necessary being and the difficulty of believing that he can be at all sincere in the utterance of his glaring fallacies. There would seem to be a laughing devil in his eye as he follows sophism with sophism, or as he envelops his argument in haze and smoke which bewilder the usual reader. He uses consummately all the arts of the accomplished prestidigitator. Reason, he admits, must have the necessary being. It is there. We cannot avoid it, or bribe it, or strangle it, or assassinate it, or rid ourselves of it by any means fair or foul. Like Banquo's ghost it will not down. It is a logical necessity. He recognises it as the unlimited all, the Highest Being, the Supreme Being, the Being of Beings. And Kant then straightway forgets all about the necessity which is so urgent and clamorous. He treats this absolute necessity as non-existent. He begins to mince his language, to hedge on his statements, to substitute *may* for *must,* and *in* order *to* break the force of his concessions, as far as he can do so without complete stultification, to discount all his admissions regarding the necessity of the necessary being. In a word he undertakes to weave a web of sophistry around the idea of the necessary being in order to blind his readers to the force of the admissions which have been wrung from him by the sheer logic of the case. This shiftiness is really a disgrace to all philosophy. With an adroitness known only to the professional sophist, he substitutes the *ens realissimum* for the *ens necessarium* and then keeping the necessity completely out of view he begins to argue the claims of the *ens realissimum* out of existence; the substitution of terms throwing the unsuspecting reader entirely off his guard. Then when he imagines his reader has lost sight of the notion of necessity, he brings all his forces into play against the *ens realissimum,* emasculated, as he believes it, of all the strength of its necessity. We shall briefly give an instance of two of his methods. First, in spite of his forced admissions that reason requires a necessary being, he has the effrontery to tell us that the idea of a necessary being is "a concept which

is accepted voluntarily only." Voluntarily, indeed! when all the laws of logic force it upon him against his will and when he can neither avoid nor evade it!

Next he tells us in as fine a piece of sophistry as even Kant can weave—but let us give his own language, for a paraphrase of it would spoil the jewel of reasoning.

"If in an identical judgment I reject the predicate and retain the subject, there arises a contradiction, and hence I say, that the former belongs to the latter necessarily. But if I reject the subject as well as the predicate, there is no contradiction, because there is nothing left that can be contradicted. (A piece of solid wisdom in the very best form of Kant. He then proceeds to explain the obvious by adding) To accept a triangle and yet reject its three angles is contradictory, but there is no contradiction at all in admitting the non-existence of the triangle and of its three angles."

Passing over the obvious comment that it is only inside of bedlam that people argue about things that are non-existent, we come to his masterpiece—his conclusion from the foregoing. He tells us:

"The same (that is the argument of the triangle and its three angles) applies to the concept of an absolutely necessary being. Remove its existence and you remove the thing itself, with all its predicates, so that a contradiction becomes impossible." How simple it all is when a master shows you how! And we can imagine Kant smile at the ease with which he solves a problem which perplexes the rest of mankind. But alas for all Kant's logic! For the reply is not far to seek; and it is absolute and crushing. By hypothesis the necessary being cannot be removed! It is easy enough to remove a triangle, real or imaginary, with its three angles; but the case is entirely different with "an absolutely necessary being." Neither in thought nor in reality can the absolutely necessary being be removed. If we undertake to remove it we remove with it all things even Kant and his absurd mataphysics. Kant's own definition of the necessary being is that "it is something the non-existence of which is impossible." Hence to "remove the subject" of Kant's proposition, you must remove its existence and make it non-existent; but its non-existence Kant, himself, tells us is impossible. From this conclusion there is no possible escape for Kant.

But we are not yet through with Kant's aberrations on this point. He continues:

"If you say God is almighty, that is a necessary judgment, because almightiness cannot be removed, if you accept a deity, that

is, an infinite being, with the concept of which that other concept is identical. But if you say, God is not, then neither his almightiness, nor any other of his predicates is given; they are all, together with the subject, removed out of existence, and therefore there is not the slightest contradiction in that sentence."

The sophistry here is that of substitution of terms to which we have called attention above. God is, however, but the theological name for the necessary being; and it is best not to get philosophy and theology confused, as Kant does here, whether deliberately or unconsciously we know not. Hence as we are discussing the question theologically, we shall stick to philosophy, and put back the term necessary being in the place of God. If we say, with the fool, God is not, the contradiction is not at once apparent, although, in spite of Kant's statement, it is there just the same. But if instead we say—as we should—the necessary being is not, we have the most glaring kind of contradiction. We assert the non-existence of a being whose non-existence, even according to Kant, is impossible.

After perpetrating this logical solecism, Kant, evidently aware of the unsoundness of his contention, capers off into all kinds of wild discursions, all of them abounding in sophisms which we have no room here to follow (interesting as the game would be), and, evidently, in order to divert attention as soon as possible from his palpable contradictions. He indulges in dogmatic disquisitions on analytical and synthetical propositions which might be challenged at every turn, and then proceeds to put into the mouth of an imaginary opponent a varied argument constructed by Kant himself which he forthwith proceeds to demolish. We shall give one more sample of these random disquisitions which he undertakes to palm off on the world as the highest philosophy and the purest metaphysics. He says:

"Being is not a real predicate, or a concept of something that can be added to the concept of a thing. It is merely the admission of a thing, and of certain determinations in it." Kant evidently believes that there can be no such thing as the absence of being. But—and we do not think we are taking an unfair advantage of Kant's statement—if being "is not a concept of something that can be added to the concept of a thing," then certainly it must be the thing itself, and Kant proves against himself the being or existence of the necessary being. For since being is not something that can be added to the concept of the necessary being, being must be in the necessary being itself. There is no escape from this conclusion. If we doubt it we have merely to read the

very next words of Kant: "It (being) is merely the admission of a thing and of certain determinations in it." Consequently, since being is neither the concept of something that can be added to the concept of a thing; and since moreover it is the admission of a thing, being is not added to the concept of a necessary being, which, according to Kant's statement, must have had being (that is existence) from the outset; it is merely the admission of the necessary thing (that is being) itself and consequently the admission of its existence. There is no escape from this conclusion either, the road to which Kant has unguardedly left open wholly unconscious here, we think, of its far-reaching results.

He then, with about equal parts of truth and error, proceeds to analyse the notion of being and concludes thuswise. "If I then take the subject (God) with all its predicates (including that of almightiness), and say, *God is,* or there is a God, I do not put a new predicate to the concept of God, but I only put the subject by itself, with all its predicates, in relation to my concept, as its object. Both must contain exactly the same kind of thing, and nothing can be added to the concept, which expresses possibility only, by my thinking its object as simply given and saying, it is. And thus the real does not contain more than the possible. A hundred real dollars do not contain a penny more than a hundred possible dollars. For as the latter signify the concept, the former the object and its position by itself, it is clear that, in case the former contained more than the latter, my concept would not express the whole object, and would not therefore be its adequate concept."

If Kant had set out to argue the case against himself, we do not see how he could have done it better; for if the real does not contain more than the possible; that is, as Kant puts it, if the object does not contain more than the concept of it, and if a hundred real dollars do not contain a penny more than a hundred possible dollars, then the inversion of these propositions must also be true; for, though the proposition is in negative form, it is really an identical proposition. Hence it must be true that a hundred possible dollars contain exactly as much as a hundred real dollars. For the same reason the objective reality of the necessary being, that is, its existence, does not contain one iota more of reality than the concept of the necessary being; for with Kant, the concept of a thing and the possibility of a thing, are one and the same thing, as we have seen in the above quotation. In other words, according to Kant's own argument, the concept of the necessary being includes the existence of that being, and thus we find Kant hoist with his own petard. That the reality of the necessary being

is contained in the concept, Kant, all unconsciously, it is true, has proved against himself, just at the moment he was exerting all his powers to disprove the objective validity of that concept. We do not stand sponsor for Kant's logic or conclusion; but Kant here reminds us of the precocious freshman, home for his first holiday, who undertook to astonish his parents by the profundity of his knowledge, and when two eggs appeared in the dish, offered to prove there were three. Pointing, he said, "That is one, and that is two; but two and one are three." As the story runs, the father disposed of his precocious boy's sophistry in quite a practical manner, by subjoining: "Wife, you take the first egg, I will take the second; and let our smart boy take the third." Like paterfamilias with his precocious boy, we take Kant at his word. We shall accept the hundred real dollars, and are perfectly willing that Kant should help himself to the hundred possible dollars, thanking him all the while for proving against himself, that there is nothing more whatever in the reality of the necessary being than in the concept of it; in other words, that, if the concept of the necessary being be a logical necessity, it contains just as much of the reality of the thing as the necessary being itself. In plain language that the concept of the necessary being implies, of necessity, its objective reality. This is Kant's own conclusion and we leave his followers to extricate him from the contradiction as best they can.

In spite of all this, however, Kant still endeavors to maintain that the concept of the necessary being is without objective validity. And the ludicrous position into which he, accordingly, succeeds in manoeuvering himself is amusing enough. He finds that labor as he may he cannot rid himself of the logical necessity of the necessary being. At the same time he is determined that this necessary being shall not be allowed objective validity. Like the president who complained that he had Congress on his hands, Kant finds that he has the necessary being on his hands, and what is more, that his system of philosophy cannot proceed with it or without it. Of all his predicaments, metaphysical and otherwise, this is the most serious and annoying. How dispose of this necessary being so as to let Kant run amuck through the hazy territory of metaphysic? That is the problem that confronted Kant. And in the whole course of philosophical absurdity there is nothing so supremely ridiculous, when properly understood, as Kant's method of disposing of it. This necessary being and the concept of it, he, in substance, tells us, is a mere joke! This necessary being which reason forces upon Kant, and without which everything would

fall into chaos, is but a mere make-believe, a pretender. With all its pretensions it is nothing more than a regulative principle which someone has had the forethought to put upon the mental apparatus of foolish man. Like the regulator on a steam-engine—lest the whole apparatus should blow up in an explosion—a safety-valve has been very thoughtfully placed on human reason (not so bad an idea after all; it often needs it) to prevent disaster—and this necessary being from which the world and all things in it derive their origin and existence, is just this safety-valve and nothing more!!! Kant is really in earnest. He quite gravely assures us that "it makes a great difference whether something is represented to our reason as an *object absolutely,* or merely as an object in the idea," the latter term of which may be more clearly understood and would have been much better expressed had Kant frankly said "an object all in my eye"; for with Kant this is its true meaning. For, strange as it may sound on the lips of a philosopher, Kant in all sobriety informs us:

"Thus I say that the concept of a highest intelligence is a mere idea, that is, that its objective reality is not to consist in its referring directly to any object (for in that case we should not be able to justify its objective validity); but that it is only a schema, arranged according to the conditions of the highest unity of reason, of the concept of a thing in general, serving only to obtain the greatest systematical unity in the empirical use of reason, by helping us, as it were, to deduce the object of experience from the imagined object of that idea, as its ground or cause."

Hence according to Kant, reason is a born schemer, and from the very start has been a perfect adept in the wiles of the twentieth century—not surpassed in this special line by the veriest bucket-shop of them all. In fraud and graft it is in the foremost rank, and on this particular point, on which its whole stock-in-trade depends, to use the language of the craft, most successfully "puts one over" on the whole mass of mankind. It pretends to us—for its own purposes, no doubt—that there is and must be a necessary being, the cause of the world; but this is only because reason is compelled to do so (which possibly might be regarded as an extenuating circumstance, since it cannot do otherwise), and this pretence helps us, "as it were," to spin the universe from this idea, which, however, is only "imagined"—and which, in all confidence, we think should be locked up for masquerading under false pretences. Lest we might be thought to be misrepresenting Kant, let him speak for himself on this point.

"Thus we are led to say, for instance, that the things of the

world must be considered (note the must) *as if* (italics Kant's) they owed their existence to some supreme intelligence"—whereas they do not; it is all make-believe. He adds:

"If then it can be shown that, although the three transcendental ideas (the psychological, cosmological and theological) cannot be used directly to *determine* any object corresponding to them, yet all the rules of the empirical use of reason, will lead, under the presupposition of such an *object* in the *idea* (that is the object all in my eye), to a systematic unity, and to an extension of our empirical knowledge, without ever running counter to them, it becomes a necessary *maxim* of reason to act in accordance with such ideas."

In other words, in the concoction of his scheme, drawn from his own inner consciousness, to overthrow the argument for the existence of God, Kant finds himself confronted with this idea of a necessary being, whose claims are so overwhelming that they cannot be set aside or ignored, but which, however, bar the path of Kant's pretensions, and being at his wit's ends to discover some escape from his difficulty, he at last hits on the by no means novel scheme of incarcerating this necessary being in an asylum for troublesome ideas, while at the same time he uses its name, its prestige, its powers, its great royal seal to stamp all transactions, as if the imprisoned sovereign were actually on the throne; whereas it is a mere dummy that is governing the empire of reason. The imposture, however, must be kept secret, all things must be done, all business transacted "as if" the true sovereign was on the throne. The main point is to keep up the imposture—if Kant's philosophy is to be saved. Make the world believe there is a necessary being while there really is none—nothing but a notion, an idea, deceive the world by admitting the inevitable truth of a necessary being, which cannot be denied, as the cause of all things; but, in order to save Kant's face, make that necessary being a farce. It is but a safety valve of reason, a regulator on Kant's system of metaphysic, where surely it is sorely needed. And all those contrarieties and contradictions are supposed to be the basis of a great philosophic system! Nay, the greatest which the world has ever known! Again he tells us

"We must consider everything that may belong to the whole of possible experience as if that experience formed one absolute but thoroughly dependent, and always, within the world of sense, conditioned unity; but at the same time, as if it, the whole of phenomena (the world of sense itself) had one supreme and all-sufficient ground, outside its sphere, namely an independent, original,

creative reason, in reference to which we direct all empirical use of *our* reason in its widest extension in such a way as if the objects themselves had sprung from that archetype of all reason." That is, we must regard the entire world of sense *as if* it had one all-sufficient ground of its existence; whereas it has nothing of the kind. This is all make-believe. There is not and cannot be any such thing. What seems to be an all-sufficient ground for the existence of the world is but the regulative principle, the safety valve, which someone has hung on reason to prevent it from running off the track.

And although from this "all-sufficient ground" which is "an independent, original, creative reason, we direct all empirical use of our reason in its widest extension in such a way as if the objects themselves had sprung from that archetype of all reason," it is all a joke. This "all-sufficient ground," supreme though it be, and this "archetype of all reason" from which all things and objects seem to spring, is merely a splendid hoax which reason, evidently on a frolic, perpetrates on itself. Kant solemnly assures us we are to pay no attention to it; "We ought not to derive the order and systematical unity of the world from a supreme intelligence, but borrow from the idea of a "supremely wise" intelligence. That is, the necessary being is there. We cannot deny it. We cannot get along without it. Nevertheless, we must ignore it. We must avoid it. We must shun the very possibility of it. It would be treason to reason even to hint that it existed at all. A recognition of it would upset Kant's theory of things; and, at any cost, this must not be risked. Yet, since we need it, and since reason must have it in some shape, we must set up a straw figure and palm it off on the world—and on reason, which cannot get along without it. Here is Kant's justification of the humbug:

"Thus if we admit a Divine Being, we have not the slightest conception, either of the internal possibility of its supreme perfection, or of the necessity of its existence, but we are able at least thus to satisfy all other questions relating to contingent things, and give the most perfect satisfaction with reference to that highest unity in its empirical application that has to be discovered, but not in reference to that hypothesis itself."

And here Kant seems to begin to hedge on his high-handed dogmatism—for he gives no reason that is worth a moment's consideration—and to take refuge in subtle distinctions. It would be excellent sport to follow him in his varied divagations and expose the transparent fallacies, but we have no room. It is, however, amusing to find him now using terms that might seem to be from

the camp of scholasticism itself, and again fully abreast of St. Anselm in this presentation of the ontological argument. But soon discovering that he is yielding his whole contention, he once more stiffens his vertebrae, and proceeds impenitent to the end. The glimmering of reason is of short duration, and he says—what we may take for his final profession of faith:

"We misapprehend the true meaning of the idea of the necessary being, if we accept it as the assertion, or even as the hypothesis of a real thing to which the ground of the systematical construction of the world should be ascribed."

And here we must take issue with Kant on this wild notion of his regulative principle. For he has here, quite unconsciously, uncovered the real problem. That problem is, not what Kant or his vaporings tells us about the nature of the idea of the necessary being; but the question is: What is the testimony of that necessary idea itself (whether in the concept or in the reality matters not here), for, in the long run, it is the only witness we have to the nature of the necessity in the case. What is the testimony which it gives as to the reality of this necessary being? This witness Kant has endeavored in a thousand ways to browbeat into silence, but what we want to know—and it is the only question worthy of consideration at all—is, what does it tell us of the objective validity of the necessary cause of the universe? Is it that it is merely a regulative principle? Is it that the necessary being is just a huge humbug given for the purpose of imposing on and deceiving reason? Is it that the mere concept of a necessary being is all that is required as the cause of all things? Or is it that the reality behind the concept, it is, that brought the universe into being? Is it that there must be a real, existing cause for the universe, or simply that the mere concept—the idea—is all that is necessary? It is insistent and urgent about the necessity; is that insistence and urgency merely for a mere concept; or is it for a real, existing cause? It is only the logical necessity that can give us any answer at all in the matter. What is its testimony? Will Kant insist that its answer is, that a mere concept is the cause of the universe, and thus stultify all knowledge; or will it be that it is the object which the concept represents that is the cause of all things? Does it tell us that a mere "regulative principle" is, in a word, the cause of the universe? Yet with all its absurdity, this is precisely where Kant's regulative principle would land us. Reason, common sense, assures us that it is not the mere idea, but the object which the idea represents which is required as the cause of the universe. Nay, even for the systematic

unity which forms the burden of Kant's pleading throughout, the mere concept is insufficient. What reason demands throughout, both for the necessary cause of all things and for the systematic unity of all its own philosophic findings, is not the mere idea which is absolutely worthless, but the object behind the idea, the reality which the idea represents. This can be the only possible answer that this logical necessity can give; and this logical necessity is the only competent witness in the case. No sane mind that grasped the situation fully could possibly give any other answer, and all the vaporings of Kant are just so much resounding brass and so many tinkling cymbals. Yet this phase of the question does not seem to have dawned upon Kant at all. But all the same, the testimony of the only witness, nay the witness without which we would not have the problem at all, is, that it is not the idea that is conceived as the cause of all things; it is the object back of the idea. The idea can do nothing but appease the cravings of reason for systematic truth; but this systematic unity demands a real necessary being as the cause of all things. All the childishness and puerility of Kant is blown to pieces, like a soap-bubble, by the very question: What is the testimony of this logical necessity? That testimony decides the whole question. The idea would be barren without the object of the idea in operation. It is not the idea that is absolutely necessary; it is the reality corresponding to the idea. It is the Being—not the concept of it—that is absolutely necessary—the necessary being. It is not the mere idea of a necessary being that reason demands; it is the necessary being itself. This is so self-evident that no man will question it when attention is called to it. But Kant has so lost himself in vain speculation, that, like the aeronaut lost in the clouds, his sense of direction is completely gone, and he not only does not any longer seem to be able to determine north, south, east or west; but what is more, he loses all notion of aboveness or belowness and cannot tell whether he is sailing towards the zenith or the nadir. Indeed, on reading the wild aberrations of Kant on the regulative principle, and pursuing his wild vagaries through the realm of metaphysics, one begins to wonder whether, after all, philosophical speculations are of any value whatever, especially when we find otherwise sane men incapable of grasping the problem to say nothing of the arguments, and wildly applauding the wildest aberrations as the quintessence of truth. And this is the weighty solution of the great question for which all the world had been waiting until Kant came!!!

We have dwelt long on the Kantian delusion; but we have not exhausted one half its possibilities. We have dealt only with his

sophisms on the ontological proof for the existence of God. His argument against the cosmological and physiotheological proofs are, if possible, still more sophistical; and the fallacies are equally transparent.

SIMON FLIMONS.

THE POLISH PEASANT

I

ONE of the most interesting figures in the world today is the European peasant—that man of the soil, who, by the fortunes of the world war, has in half a dozen countries suddenly found himself rising to the stature of a living factor in the making of history. And of all the peasants of Europe, Russian, Roumanian, Czech, Hungarian, Serbian, or what not, perhaps the most interesting is the peasant of Poland, because of the vital part he plays in the fortunes of the one country destined above all its neighbors, by reason of its peculiar geographical situation, to preserve the future peace of Europe. Vastly in a majority in the Polish population, and holding a dominating position in the Polish congress, the peasant of Poland is a man well worth our getting acquainted with.

But he is interesting from more than merely the political viewpoint. Simply as a human being, he is, in fact, one of the most picturesque figures in the world today. "Good stock," the salt of the earth, with qualities like iron, he lives a rugged and wholesome life in his little *wioska* or village, a life which, despite the changes of time, still bears many marks of an ancient communal system, holding his councils, electing his *soltys* and *starostas,* and realizing in his own small circle a rudimentary democracy such as his ancestors knew further back than history goes. He is a traditionalist to the marrow, the most conservative creature on earth, clinging to age-old customs and habits with the greatest tenacity; not very progressive, it is true; hard and rather inflexible, if not intractable, in the modern movement of affairs, but sure, solid and dependable. As for his conservatism, it shows at every angle of his daily life. In no corner of the world, for example, have the inroads of fashion in dress made less headway than on the Polish countryside among the Polish peasants. The spinning-wheel and the loom still hold their place of honor in the cottage. Homespun is still the garb of solid respectability. Men's coats and women's skirts are cut as were those of their great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers for generations back. When they come into the cities they still wear unabashed the brightest and

best of this picturesque garb, though, alas, I must confess that in the case of the women I have seen its fine primitive beauty spoiled more than once by staggering experiments with French high heels!

The peasant's cottage is small, either of frame, logs or brick, white-washed often, and usually with a thatched roof which is the owner's special pride. He may have a telephone or an electric light wire strung to his gable, but the thatch seems to stay. If, however, the roof be shingled, its long sloping surfaces are not left to fate unadorned, but are often painted with a design of conventional squares and angles, red or blue, which give an effect of neat gaiety to what might otherwise be a drab spot on the landscape. High up alongside the door, or on the roof, or at the end of the cottage, under the gable, one will almost invariably see a cross either painted or made with the bricks set out in the desired cruciform lines. Thus the Polish peasant puts a blessing on his little home, even while he is building it, embedding that blessing into the actual structure, as it were; and at the same time he proclaims to all who pass that his is the house of a Christian. These are the definite intents of this typical Polish decoration.

Such is the cottage of the plains, in the dooryard of which will be often seen in the early autumn months neat piles of peat fresh cut from the neighboring marshes and seasoning for winter use. In the mountain districts of the Tatry quite a distinct building pattern, entirely of wood, is found, now known among architects as the Zakopané style. The steep roofs of the Tatry cottage tell the story of heavy snows, while its wide eaves and galleries and colonnades are made for the torrential rains and the blazing sunlight of mountain regions. Whole villages are found in the Tatry hills built in this picturesque and airy fashion.

The garden around the Polish peasant's cottage, plainsman or mountaineer, is bright with flowers. Flower-boxes often fill the windows. All the old friends we know at home bloom there in profusion, lilacs, the sweet-smelling pink, the tall, lusty hollyhock, pansies, asters, roses galore, and invariably the sunflower, the seeds of which are in some districts a staple delicacy.

When you enter the cottage of a Polish peasant you will encounter good manners that may astonish you. Your host, in the first place, will be sure to greet you with a hearty "May Jesus Christ be praised!" It is the greeting of the Polish countryman for a thousand years; to which you must answer, "For ever and for ever." This custom may surprise you at first; but if by chance you should surprise him—if you are an old acquaintance, let us say, arriving unexpectedly—you will hear another exclamation, this time straight out of the Book:

"And the Word became!" It is not irreverence but sincerity and honest piety that speaks thus. As for the manners, everyone I know who has come in contact with the Polish peasant in his home has been impressed by the unconscious grace of his modest etiquette. I was continually opening my eyes at revelations of gentle breeding in the most unexpected places. The manners of the children, neither bashful nor forward, were a constant source of delight to us.

The interior of the cottage, not well lighted, would be dark were it not for the white-washed walls. There is always one great central feature, the oven. This is built into the house, or rather the house is built around it; a huge permanent affair, which not only bakes the family bread and cooks the family meals, but serves also as the single heating apparatus of the home, beds even being made, in the coldest season, on its broad stone flanks. After the oven the next thing that catches the visitor's eye is the "Holy Corner"—I know no other term to use—in which hangs a crucifix or a picture of the Blessed Virgin, the Madonna of Chenstohova. This is the family shrine, before which the rosary or other family prayers are recited. Often a miniature sanctuary lamp burns on the shelf under the crucifix or image; there are blessed wax candles on either side; many festoons of colored tissue paper cut into the most delicate lacelike patterns; and fresh flowers, if it be the season, breathing the tribute of the fields to the peasant's holy of holies. Here also, or perhaps upon one of the rafters, if not over the door where you have entered, you will see the little cluster of grain and flowers which has been blessed in the village church on Lady Day, and which is treasured the year around along with a spray of evergreen or palm given out at Mass on Palm Sunday.

If there is a baby in the house—and there always is a baby in the peasant's house—you may see a cradle that you won't forget. A supple elm pole bends down from the rafters, with a strap or a heavy cord on the end of it. The cradle is a basket tied to the cord. With what a gentle motion, rise and fall, it hushes the little one! It is as if a soft wind in the trees were rocking him.

II

The land, the countryside of Poland, is so intimately woven into the life and language of the people that even the names of months of the year are taken directly from the fields. Thus April, "Kwiecien," is "the flowering time"; Lipca," July, is "the month of the blooming linden"; August, "Sierpien," is "the sickle"; September, "Wrzesien," "the heather"; November, "Listopad," "the falling leaves"; while "Pazdziernik," October, is "the month of the flax," the word signi-

fying the hull of fibre of the flax straw. If you happen into a peasant village at this season you will see a curious and a very ancient process going on, as the flax is threshed and drawn and worked into its eventual linen fabric. "Bees" are held, peasant women going from house to house to help their neighbors, making much merriment and enjoying plenty of gossip and singing and dancing on the way.

The flax is hauled in from the field, either in the low narrow wicker-work carts, which Americans in Poland have christened "puppy baskets," or else by hand, usually by the women, to whom the entire ritual of the flax seems to more or less belong, and who take special pride in the ease and grace with which they can walk up the road with huge bundles poised on their heads, or with broad wooden yokes across their shoulders, a bundle or pail swinging from each end of the stick. The straw is first soaked, either in the village stream or in a big primitive vat hewn from the trunk of a tree; pounded and worked by a great pestle into the proper degree of softness and pliability; then drawn and redrawn with a large wooden comb until it becomes fibrous and stringy.

One often sees long strands of this fibre draped on the fences, where it is hung out to dry before it goes to the spinning wheel and the loom, to be woven into great bolts, which later must be carefully washed and spread on the grass to bleach. Seventy-five per cent. of the garb worn by the Polish peasants is homespun.

Flax and the homespun linen of the countryside play an intimate part in the life of the Polish peasant. His days are woven into its fabric, from birth to death, from his swaddling clothes to his funeral sheet; from the time that he runs knee deep through its blue flowery fields till he is wrapped in his shroud, not to speak of the good old-fashioned uses to which his wife puts it, making oil from its seed and poultices for his back. It enters into the Polish folk-lore, too, one of the peasants' favorite legends being the story of the coming to Poland of the first flax, the "treasure from Heaven." According to this legend the flax was planted in the beginning by the Madonna of Chenstohova to befriend a motherless peasant girl who was in distress over her parents' illness and the ruin of their crops. "Worry no more, my daughter," said the Queen. "I shall send you a treasure from Heaven. Tomorrow, when the sun rises you shall find new flowers in your garden, smiling up at you with eyes blue as the sky. Pluck them and they shall serve you well."

So it befell, as the legend goes; and the bewildered girl obeyed, though she did not know what to do with the flax after it was plucked. But the Madonna came in the night, attended by troops of angels, who set up a workshop in the poor cottage, and taught the

child how to work the flax and spin and weave it. "And when morning came Hela held in her hands the first piece of linen in all Poland. And she made a shirt of it for her father, and at once he was cured. And from that day there has been linen in Polska, and that is why the flax is a holy flower. How could it be else? Was not the Lord Christ Himself wrapped in it both at His birth and at His burial?"

Reymont, the most famous of living Polish novelists, whose analysis of Polish character is so keen that the German authorities, during their occupation of the country, ordered his writings read by all the Prussian military officials, writes at his best when he deals with the Polish peasant. There is one page in his novel, "The Comedienne," which sums up in a few sentences the whole life of the peasant. "Imagine for a moment the fields," he writes, "green in springtime, golden in summer, russet-grey and mournful in winter. Now behold the peasant as he is, from his birth until his death—the average normal peasant." And he goes on:

"The peasant boy is like a wild, unbridled colt, like the irresistible urge of the spring. In the prime of his manhood he is like the summer, a physical potentate, hard as the earth, baked by the July sun, grey as his fallows and pastures, slow as the ripening of the grain. Autumn corresponds entirely to the old age of the peasant—that desperate, ugly old age, with its bleared eyes and earthly complexion, like the ground beneath the plough. It lacks strength, and goes about in tattered garments like the earth that has been reft of the bulk of its fruit, with only a few dried and yellow stalks sticking out here and there in the potato fields; the peasant is already slowly returning to the earth whence he sprung, the earth which itself becomes dumb and silent after the harvest and lies there in the pale autumn sunlight, quiet, passive and drowsy. . . Afterward comes winter; the peasant in his white coffin, in his new boots and clean shirt, lies down to rest in that earth which has, like him, arrayed itself in a white shroud of mist and has fallen to sleep—that earth whose life he was a part of, which he unconsciously loved, and together with which he dies, as cold and hard as those ice-covered furrows that nourished him."

III

I never shall forget the first time I visited the Polish village of Lowich. It was Sunday, and when we arrived Mass was being celebrated in the old Abbey Church. The place was packed, with the congregation overflowing at all the doors. A young peasant mother, in brown and orange stripes, knelt by the main entrance with her

little three-year-old girl, the child dressed in an exact duplicate of her own gay garb, even to a wee kerchief folded on her baby breast. But oh, how sleepy and noddy she was in her warm Sunday gown! . . . One or two young fellows, in top boots and long, black much-befrogged and braided coats, loitered by the iron gate. They carried their flat beribboned hats in their hands, and knelt when the Consecration bell rang.

Within, in the dim light of the large church, we could see nothing but a great irregular floor of color, a mass of kneeling people clad in such rainbow hues, such kerchiefs and cloaks and shawls and skirts as I had never seen before, not even in the Warsaw ballet. And then a hymn began; and it grew and grew till the whole church echoed with it, and the kneeling mother by the door and the loiterers by the gate joined in. The little one, her eyes still dewy with sleep, awoke, but she stayed very still. The hymn went on, sad, minor-chorded and chant-like and very long. . .

The scene brought back memories of Chenstohova, that chief of all the shrines of Poland, where as many as eighty thousand pilgrims have gathered at one time to kneel and pray for their country. It is an historic spot, the scene of the famous defense of the monks of Yasna Gora against a Swedish invasion in the seventeenth century, and also the shrine of the celebrated "Black Madonna," an ancient painting on wood, so called because of the discoloration with which age has darkened it. According to tradition, this picture was painted by St. Luke the Apostle. It is deeply venerated by all Poles. I have seen thousands of peasant pilgrims kneeling before it, their packs on their backs, their bright garb dusty with travel over many miles on foot. I have heard thousands singing at the altar of Chenstohova, their faces and their voices lifted in rapture as the curtain was slowly raised from the sacred picture, while the organ pealed, and bugles high in the galleries above the shrine blew a thrilling aria of praise.

When the hymn was finished at Lowich that Sunday morning and the congregation began to pour out of the church, the sadness of the peasants' chant was quickly forgotten in the gay picture they made. Such a massing and movement of color it is impossible to describe. I had seen touches of it before at the Diet in Warsaw, or when an occasional peasant appeared in the city streets, or a little group crossed the open fields near the roads where we happened to travel. But here there were hundreds of them, crowding through the big churchyard gates, streaming into the wide street and the square beyond, all clad in their famous rainbow wool, a great animated blur of color, rich and bright and gay, lik an illuminated page from a story-book come suddenly to life.

The men's trousers, tucked into high boots, and the women's skirts, all were of the famous Lowich wool, broad striped, dyed much in canary yellow and orange, alternating with blacks and browns, violet and amaranth, rich chocolate hues, deep purples, green and rose and cream color. But yellow seemed to prevail, a yellow so radiant and luminous that I can liken it to nothing so much as to the hue of the California poppy.

The men's vests were very gay, but their coats were more sober, black, long, and much befrogged and trimmed with braid. The women's fancy aprons and their cloaks, very full and gathered at the neck, were of a piece with their skirts; and their skirts were so ample, one might think they were wearing hoops. Most of them wore high-laced boots, the laces of a color to match the dress; a few wore tan top boots, cut like a cavalryman's. Many carried their cloaks on their arms, displaying linen bodices literally crusted with rich colored embroidery. Around their necks endless chains of coral or amber beads; on their heads kerchiefs, tied close if they were matrons, worn loose if they were unmarried, with long braids reaching below their waists. When a Polish peasant girl marries, she cuts her hair and binds her brow with a tight kerchief of wifehood. But she dresses none the less prettily whether she shows her braids or not. And she clings to this gaiety of raiment even into old age; she walks all her days in its rainbow hues. We saw scores of tots, some blue eyed and flaxen hair, some dark as gypsies, like dolls out of the Warsaw shops, clinging to their mothers or their grannies' skirts. The grannies, too, though wrinkled and grey, were dressed in the gayest of Sunday "rainbows."

The hand of nature weaves a bright thread through the whole fabric of the Polish peasant's life. Flowers especially play an intimate part in his history—at his christening, at his betrothal, at his wedding. A christening in Poland is a joyous affair, while to witness a Polish wedding is a privilege not to be forgotten. If it be summer, bride and groom are wreathed with flowers. On the eve of betrothal her bridesmaids have crowned the bride-to-be with rosemary, barberry blossoms, rue and the green leaves of the periwinkle; but on the wedding day her crown is a much gayer one, of daisies, rosebuds, whatever flowers the season affords, built high like a coronet and tied with streamers of multi-colored ribbon worked in rich patterns of flowers and leaves, these ribbons themselves telling a gay story, since they are the traditional gift of Polish peasant beaux to their ladies; a girl's collection of streamers on her wedding day representing the extent of her popularity in maidenhood. There is dancing on the lawn, a feast spread out of doors; or else, if it be fall or

winter, in the house, where the tables creak under their festive load. The cup of cheer brims for days before and after, to welcome any and every guest, friend or stranger, who happens along. The bridesmaids sing; the older folks chat in the corners; the dancing keeps up for hours, till the sod thunders or the floor of the cottage trembles under the gay stamp of boots. The wedding cake, which in the eastern border region is called "korowaju," has a very special significance, and must be first cut by the "match-makers," usually the godparents of the bridal couple. After the wedding, when the bride first enters her new home, she is welcomed with the traditional gift of bread and salt, symbol of homely plenty; and this is a custom equally honored among the gentry.

Sometimes a Polish wedding lasts for days. I went to one one Saturday evening in the district of Lodz. We danced till six o'clock the next morning—there was no breaking away; left for Liskow; returned Monday night—and found the wedding still going on! But, elaborate as the affair was, the *pièce de resistance* of the feast was truly a reminder of war times. Plain rabbit. There was fun and hospitality enough, however, to more than make up for all the fatted capons in Europe.

Summer evenings the peasants often set their table out of doors, eating their simple fare in the shade of the family apple tree. Then they have music, of flute or fiddle, and they sing and chat till the frogs begin their nocturnal chant. The stork on the roof has already given the signal. The old Polish legend says that what the frogs sing when bedtime comes and the stork, their daytime enemy, disappears in his nest, is a joyous refrain, "The stork is dead! the stork! the stork!"—first the froggy chorus leader, then a duet; a quartette; finally a vociferous song in unison, "The stork is dead! Kro-ak! Kro-ak! Hurrah-h-h!" The peasant who told us this, having talked of the problems of his country and his kind, particularly of invading Bolsheviks and Germans, smiled dryly at the frogs and said, "But he isn't dead. He'll eat them again tomorrow, if they don't look out." Frogs, as it happens, figure a good deal in Polish folklore and fairy tales, and give rise to many proverbs, such as the classic, "Frogs in the pond know nothing of the sea."

The peasant's work is hard and his hours are long. But if he and his kind are a quiet lot, not given to loquacity, they seem to be always ready to sing. In the fields they improvise songs as they go along, with tunes that are always melodious, and words that are either witty or sharp or very tender and sad. They set all their thoughts and feelings to impromptu music. It was from long days listening

to peasant melodies that Chopin drew much of the material embodied in his immortal compositions.

The Polish peasants are a long-lived and prolific race, age into the nineties being common, and families always large. They are vegetarians in spite of their heavy toil; yet what strength, what ruddy skin, what clear good-humored eyes! The men are big framed fellows, often of almost giant stature, and strong as oxen. When they appear, as I have seen them on occasion, in the uniform of their military service, wearing the enormously tall caps of the Ulans, for instance, they are veritable giants. Powerful, broad-backed, with the stamp of the wind and sun on them, they are a hardy, sturdy people, women as well as men; the women (as I have frequently seen them in wartime) doing the tasks not only of the men but of the beasts, drawing plough or wagon like horse or oxen. In the mountain districts I have seen men bearing a strange resemblance to our southwest Indians, almost bronze in coloring, high cheekboned and supple. Their costume, brightly trimmed with braid and buttons and beads, and their white wool close-fitting trousers cut to the shape of the leg and slit at the ankle, not unlike the buckskin breeches of the Indian, heightened the effect, which was completely topped off by the "ciupapa" or mountaineer's stick, the handle of which is practically a tomahawk.

IV

The peasant of Poland has a deep-seated respect for books and learning. He takes readily to schooling, and is already making the most of the new educational laws of the country, which are not by any means designed exclusively for the younger generation. Numbers of men and women of middle age may be seen already attending the evening classes opened in towns and villages, figures which would be pathetic were it not for the admirable pluck they show studying their A B C's and trying to learn to spell and write. Pupils of this kind are far from being ignorant, however, for their general knowledge of Polish history and geography is much greater than might be expected, thanks to the traditional teaching of the countryside, which usually has had its centre in the manor house. That the peasant's eagerness for learning is fruitful is evidenced in the fact that he has already shown his capacity in letters and art and affairs by giving some of the best-known men of the nation to public life. Witos, the prime minister of the Republic today, is a peasant.

The whole subject of Polish art and architecture might be touched upon here, in relation to the peasant, for it is an interesting fact that through all the centuries during which Polish culture developed,

inevitably shaped and moulded by France and Italy, the arts and crafts of the Polish peasant remain untouched by outside influence. While the formal architecture of Poland, for example, passed through the varying stages of Roman and Renaissance and Baroque, common to all European countries, the Polish peasant learned to build his house and his church in a style uniquely his own, designing its steep roofs with their sloping curves and wide eaves—like the careful topping-off of a grain stack—to shed the heavy snows and rains of his northern climate. In woodcraft and weaving, pottery and basketwork too, he and his women-folk made their own expressive way from aboriginal crudity to finished art, developing a mode of line and symbol unlike any other in the world, except it be, curiously enough, that of our south-western Indians, whose bright colors and stripes, at their best, often resemble the more primitive Polish peasant handcraft. In this regard, it is interesting to note the strange fact that, in far off Europe, the peasant of the Polish plain, without any possible foreign inspiration, invented the art of Batik supposed to have originated solely in Batavia: exactly the same process of designing and coloring with wax springing up ages ago in these two immensely different lands. In Poland it began with the coloring and picturing of eggs, at a time when Christianity, just introduced, appropriated the old Festival of Spring to the celebration of Easter: and this fact brings up another interesting detail of the history of the peasant and his art. It was due to the foresight of Italian and French missionaries that the faith finally took root in the Polish soil, at a time when its introduction was being fiercely resented because the earlier German missionaries had ruthlessly stripped the land of every sign and symbol of its heathen age, stamping the iron "verboten" of the Teuton on all the old customs and usages grown dear to the people from immemorial ages. The Italians, knowing better than that, followed the wise policy of the early Church in Rome. Instead of tearing down the old pagan structure of festival and folk-lore, they put a Christian blessing on it and preserved it with a new significance.

Today it is from the peasant art of Poland, thus originating in the very soil and thus preserved, that the modern art of the country is drawing its strongest inspiration. One needs to see with his own eyes the rich and curious designing of Polish peasant furniture, wood-carving, leather-embossing, pottery, rug-weaving or embroidery, to realize what a fund of originality it furnishes to the artist of the new Poland; a glimpse, for example at the treasure-chest of a peasant bride—a treasure in itself of delicate carving and chasing and coloring, almost Oriental in the sumptuous intricacies of its deep-cut lines and figures. So also in the case of architecture:

the whole story of modern building design in Poland to-day draws its inspiration from peasant origin. And so also, as time goes on, the whole structure of the new Poland of modern times will draw much of its strength and stability from the peasant, the Christian God-fearing Catholic man of the soil.

Minneapolis, Minnesota. CHARLES PHILLIPS.

POETRY

POETRY is both an imitative and an imaginative art. As a choice and condensed form of emotional speech, it possesses the reality which depends on its directly recalling our previous thoughts and feelings. But as a system of rhythmical and melodious effects—not indebted for their potency to their associated ideas alone—it appeals also to that mysterious power by which mere arrangements of sound can convey an emotion which no one could have predicted beforehand, and which no known laws can explain.

In poetry man seems to identify himself with the power that has found its expression in the hierarchy of created things. The impulse of this creative power appears, again, to be twofold—towards perfection at each stage of an ascent—and towards that ascent itself. Poetry has the same twofold impulse. In the ideal poem there must be perfect fusion of form and substance which is sometimes identified with beauty and is one aspect of the beautiful; the ideal is, in this aspect, static. The ideal is dynamic also, because, as the poet's grasp of things deepens and widens, its expression in terms of beauty takes corresponding scope, increasing in dignity and splendor, or in freshness and radiance. There is thus a hierarchy of beauty in the works of man as in those of nature. Also, in poetry as in nature, though with a difference, beauty descends upon the work.

One function of poetry is to express emotion, and there is much emotion that can only be satisfactorily expressed poetically. Take the emotion of love. It is not by chance that the lover begins to appreciate poetry, and sometimes to write it, or that the love poetry of the world is one of its most enduring possessions.

Prose fails to express what is desired. And it is the same with religion. A high religious emotion naturally approaches in its expression to the poetical form, as can be seen, for example, in the Hebrew prophets. Again, it is not by chance that saints like St. Teresa or St. John of the Cross found that it was in poetry that they could come nearest to the expression of those high mystical aspirations for which, however, every mystic tells us no words can really be found.

Poetry, and all art, is one of the ends of life; not that every man

must be a poet or an artist, but that no mind is fully mind which does not respond æsthetically to the experience of life, does not feel the sense of value or prize any clear and intense expression of it. It is only when we begin to think, and to think perversely, that we question the value of poetry or any art. Primitive peoples practice the arts, without asking such questions about them, as they eat and drink. Yet the questions are worth asking, because they lead to precise statements of the value of art and turn what was only instinct into faith. While Peacock was saying that poetry was obsolete, the poets were enriching it with new intellectual material; Shelley, for instance, was making poetry out of concepts that once had been the property only of philosophers. Poetry may become obsolete if it ceases to be poetry and becomes mere verse making; but, while it remains a living art, it makes discoveries like science, turning novelties of thought into novelties of art, digesting and transforming them for its own purpose. Browning, in his essay on Shelley, has a fine passage on this process of poetry, where he speaks of "thought and passion lavished by the poet on the else incompleted magnificence of the sunset, the else uninterpreted mystery of the lake."

Good example in art itself will stir latent perceptions; it may even hope to persuade a few who seemed to have no faculty for perceiving at all; but, although it has been a common practice among poets to leave the making of their poetry at moments to expound the virtue of their art, it is to be feared that their counsels do not, even as often as their creating, bring the deaf to hearing. How rare it is to find a good listener! Watch their faces, examine their eyes, and you will meet with no sign of attention, no effort to grasp what is being said to them. Most people we meet have preoccupied eyes. It is above all in children that we meet with that pure, direct look which goes out from them to the person or the thing they are endeavoring to understand. A man either understands the nature and significance of poetry by intuition, or he does not, and there is, truly, no middle state. If he has the instinct, circumstance may have much to do with its development and discipline; most of us know of cases where an alert feeling for excellence has been paralyzed for years by bad teaching and ill-chosen nourishment, only to be regenerated by what seemed to be mere accident. If he has not the instinct, little chance as good example may have with him, the most courageous argument will have less.

The spirit of man has two activities; the æsthetic or intuitive activity by which he gains perceptions, and the intellectual or scientific activity by which he makes concepts or judgment. Poetry is the expression in human language of our intuitions; prose is the

expression of our judgments. When a child says "Hark, bell!" he is expressing an intuition, and, in a limited sense, he is making poetry as Gray was making poetry when he wrote "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day."

It is true that the limits of melody within which poetry works are very narrow. Between an exquisite and a worthless line there is no difference of sound in any way noticeable to an unintelligent ear. For the mere volume of sound—the actual sonority of the passage—is a quite subordinate element in the effect which is produced mainly by relations and sequences of vowels and consonants too varying and delicate to be reproducible by rule, although far more widely similar, among European languages at least, than is commonly perceived. But this limitation of the means employed, which may itself be an added source of pleasure from the sense which it may give of difficulty overcome, is by no means without analogies in other forms of art.

Poetry is something that cannot be defined; yet what profit and pleasure may accrue from our struggles for a definition! The best of creative criticism is often nothing more than a joyful quest for some Absolute or Alkahest of great poetry.

The main pleasure or satisfaction derived from poetry by the man who hears or reads it is the enjoyment of a new and more perfect world. Of all the possible emotions, the strongest and most binding is felt when the poet's consciousness of this world is tinged with man's universal longing for a world more perfect; for when the life which he creates is nearest to the life we must ourselves live, then the eternal contrast is most visible and most poignant.

The idealist philosophy on which this conception of poetry is founded is here enlarged into idealism of another kind—that of the spirit of man, which must ever be making for itself a new and better world. Abstract value is exceedingly difficult to express in poetry without a sort of barrenness—though occasionally imagination may enter in.

The poet is a creature of moods in an extraordinary degree. His life is one of sudden reawakenings, unpremeditated responses to long silent voices; of discoveries by chance, and prospects that sparkle through unsuspected glades. He is to be believed intensely, and frankly disbelieved in many of his expressions. He remarks as he points to a cloud that it has almost a camel's shape. We look, and by the mass it has! Almost without waiting for our agreement, he turns the cloud into a weasel. It certainly is backed like a weasel. Or like a whale? Very like a whale. In truth, it is the habit of this strange being to let the shifting clouds be what he pleases, and

there is in him that power of mesmerizing which compels us to accept his blends of truths and fallacies. Himself, he is compelled to accept. Even in such a question as that of taste, or the faculty of selecting harmoniously, he is not his own master. This "man in love, none knoweth where," to-morrow finds in those very materials which to-day so inevitably discarded themselves from his esemplastic impulse, the essence of a new imagination. In short, whatever the reflection communicated through the means of a poem, the gift of poetic genius enshrines it, and in its context it becomes truth.

The mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconsistent wind, awakens to transitory brightness, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet.

A poet's verse can pierce no further than his inward vision. His own heart is all he has to feel with, his own faith to live for. But the impulse must come before it can be obeyed. Skill is something—a great deal; imaginative intensity is everything. However high the cause and grave the issue, there is no need for a rigid solemnity, nor for too sedulous a reflectiveness. "In all heroic poetry the passionate interest is in the thing itself, rather than in thoughts about it," and, above all, the importance of realizing that poetry should inspire rather than teach; this last being, perhaps, the key to the work as a whole.

Poetry is part of a universal tendency to beauty—a tendency in the humbler walks of creation almost universally realized. Beauty is paramount in the natural world; and man, as he contemplates it, experiences delight and aspiration. The beauty of a butterfly, for instance, is a miracle for which nothing in the nature of a butterfly accounts. Heaven's rainbow has descended upon a trivial insect's wings. More than aptitude, more than perfection of fitness, beauty is thus the reflection upon the creature of the spirit of the created world. It is completion in incompletion. The response to it of the perceiving soul is desire as well as delight.

"Too much is made on occasion of the relationship between poetic utterance and the revealed truths of science," writes a *Times* critic. "The poet who would trace the history of humanity from its most ancient beginnings need possess no proper knowledge of evolution. Setting before us a world made in a twinkling and peopled with men and women on the instant, of like passions with ourselves, why should he not succeed? We have before us as we write the Blake-like illustrations of the Bible made by Isaac Taylor when Blake was still in his prime—the same which Rossetti eulogized. They bear in

their odd detail and large simplicity the weight of antiquity; they fascinate the mind into vast imaginings; and yet, they depend in no sense upon a literal fidelity. It is in their context that these maniacal fowl which scream round the exposed body of Saul, in the gaze of the cloud-ridden moon, are true. Ornithology knows them not. Thus with poetry; and nonetheless, while poetry at large is in agreement with matter of fact and of experience, so poetry in the individual, for all its variations and returns and derelictions, harmonizes into a definite attitude. It is unjust to a poet that we should expect of him a fully examined and elucidated philosophy, for it is for him that the wind bloweth where it listeth; and yet his expression does in fine yield his criticism of life. In emotional quality, not in creed, lies the uniqueness of a poet."

The mechanic has in him often something of the priest; the genius, something of the fool. And so it is in poetry. The absolute is relative; the realist has his romance; the poet of acceptance strikes his note of wistful wonder. We may make our distinctions between them as we do between fools and wise; but we have always to remember that in these fields, unlike the fields of science, distinctions cannot be classifications. For every poet is a spirit on whom all such prisoning bolts are barred in vain.

Why should a poet trouble to write down and to publish his poetry? Because, says Sir Henry Newbolt, of his desire for personal relations, through the sympathy of his readers, with his fellow-men. Partly so, no doubt; more, perhaps, because the greater the number of minds in which his creation finds a home, the more surely does it exist as a thing made. The poet will die, and with him, very likely before him, his own hold on his own creation. The thing that he has made will live on in other minds. The communication of it is only a part of the act of creation of the new and better world.

But the poet's conception is not, of its nature, "naked," like the philosopher's—that is to say, it cannot be expressed in general or abstract terms. It includes, from the start and in itself, all the circumstance in which it is expressed. There is no "naked truth" in *Hamlet;* try to separate Shakespeare's conception from the details in which it is expressed, the imperfections of Hamlet himself and the vices of the court, and nothing remains. Shakespeare did not temper his planetary music for mortal ears with any alloy of custom or habit; what Shelley calls the alloy is the music itself; and, in attempting to apologize for it, he misunderstands the process even of his own poetry. For he was fired by certain philosophic concepts, as other poets are fired by actions or characters; but these concepts

were, in his own words, the instruments and materials of his poetry; they were in themselves no more his planetary music than actual people or things were Shakespeare's planetary music.

Poetry is the art of expressing an intuition in words, this intuition being in effect a spiritual expression of reality. Now, this sort of expression is not confined to a single clan; it is the common activity of man, sublimated in the case of the poet by the poet's natural gift of universal interpretation. In poetry a fabric of great extent and variety is produced through the working of a complex intuition, grasped and expressed by one single act of the spirit. And the general public comes to the poet in quest of this interpretation, which will help it to a fuller realization of its own mind and soul. Therefore, while the artist works for the sake of his art alone, the public accepts him because his art, in process of self-expression, interprets also the public's own life, and finds a meaning for the hidden and secret impulses which distract it.

Notwithstanding the fact that the chief glory of English literature lies in poetry, it does not seem that the English are a poetical race. Few people read poetry, and probably fewer still regard it as of any practical value in the concerns of life. It is not a point that can be argued. Some have the passion for poetry, and find in it one of the greatest happinesses of their life; others apparently are born without the taste and can never acquire it.

A poet, too, is of no country, unless it be of that which lies "far beyond the stars," "over the hills and far away, where the unchanging meadows are." He, if any man, is the true cosmopolitan. A faithful patriot can be of any country. But since a poet is a man, and every man, whether he be Swiss or Roman, Rhinelander or Eskimo, is in some degree, and for good or indifferent reasons, the lover of his country; so every poet is a patriot.

The poet is concerned with what he himself values, for that alone is what he can immediately express; but the philosopher is concerned, if with value at all, with what can be proved universally of value. Shelley does not try to prove the truth of his philosophic ideas; they are to him only a means by which he expresses his value for that which he calls the Life of life, the Lamp of earth, and which is as real to him as men and women are to Shakespeare. And as Shakespeare must express his sense of the value of certain characters and actions by drawing them, so Shelley must express his sense of the value of this Life of life by drawing it, or her. The "living images" he uses are indeed living; and they are not an alloy, but the poem itself, the very representation, in the terms of

his art, of that Life of life which he must draw for us because he values it, or her, so passionately.

It is all very well to point out that one poet has more of one quality and another of another. But to suppose that you can sharply divide them into distinct classes, almost into sheep and goats, is a delusion. You have no sooner said that there is one sort of poetry whose mental value consists in a distinct and logical enunciation of ideas, such as that of Lucretius and Wordsworth, and another sort, such as that of Shelley, whose mental value consists in the suggestive richness of passion or symbol latent in rhythm, than the symbolic rhythm of Lucretius, indeed of Wordsworth, to say nothing of the passion of either, or of Shelley's love of enunciating ideas, rush in to confute you.

Criticism is not to be judged by the help it gives to artists. One might as well suppose that philosophy was to be judged by the help it gives to the Deity. The philosopher does not tell the Deity how He ought to have made the universe; nor do we read philosophy for the sake of the judgments at which philosophers arrive. We do not want to know Kant's opinion because he is Kant; what interests us is the process by which he arrives at that opinion, and it is the process which convinces us that his opinion is right, if we are convinced.

Beauty is happiness, it is our chief delight, it satisfies. The morning air, the robin's song, the panorama of the heavens, a flower or the petal of a flower—does not the soul answer to these things, do they not summon us, do they not promise fulfillment for the whole of the soul's demands? The beauty of the world brings rapture, and the rapture is a rapture of security. The river of poetry rises from the rock of assurance; the voice of man singing is the voice of man established, man at home. Witnessing sublime harmonies, the poet works without fear of any morrow; for to-morrow can but enlarge to-day's promises.

The philosophic critic writes not as one who knows how to produce that which he criticizes better than he who has produced it, but as one who has experienced art; and his own experience is really the subject matter of his criticism. If he *is* a philosophic critic, he will know that his experience is itself necessarily imperfect. As some one has said, "We do not judge works of art; they judge us"; and the critic is to be judged by the manner in which he has experienced art, as the painter is to be judged by the manner in which he has experienced the visible world. All the imperfections of his experience will be betrayed in his criticism; where he is insensitive, there

he will fail, both as artist and as philosopher; and of this fact he must be constantly aware.

Poetry cannot be written. Its life is in sound. Few things are harder for an Englishman than to catch the metrical values of good French verse; but hear it declaimed by a Frenchman of competent taste, and you find something new in a language which you have probably decreed to be unsuited for poetry.

It has been said that the fault of the New Poetry is certainly not that it lacks life, but rather, principally, that it lacks beauty and spirituality. Life it has in abundance, the fierce, feverish life of a mind that has not yet established its relations with its environment, and is perpetually launching excursions into new territory, without consolidating the ground that it has won. The general atmosphere is that of a world in which there is no prevailing current of ideas, no pervading intellectual stimulus, and from which the natural refuge is found in the exaggeration of trivial incidents into some sort of symbolic relation of big movements, and in the acceptance of individual whims and wayward fancies in place of firm philosophic ideals.

The truth is that poetry is like the soul of man, a thing of infinite faculty, variety and elusiveness, and will not be confined in any particular pen or partition at the will of a classifying critic. The wise critic is he who studies poets as wise lovers of human nature study men and women; not in order to decide that this is good and that bad, this a fool and that a genius, this a mere lawyer and that a mere priest or a mere mechanic; but to see what there is in each of fine quality, what each contributes to the infinitely various universe of humanity.

Love is more than beauty, and the quality we observe in created things of a beauty that has descended upon them is clearly the gift of love. It is because beauty points us upwards to this halo of love that it satisfies the soul and assures it that the demands of love will be fulfilled. And since we know that in the life which death closes they are unfufilled, it is an irresistible inference that the soul survives.

It is of sincere poetry like this that there is born that mood of exaltation which enables some to bear the most stunning loss, and helps them to see that there is more in these deaths than an occasion of personal sorrow, and the sadness at the sight of men cut off in their prime. Poetry helps us to see deeply into the true heart of things. In hours of sorrow many have found their truest comfort in poetry. Poetry, in short, becomes a subjecting of things to the mind, a testing of material interests in the searchlight of the spirit.

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

ACCORDING to the law of England the utmost latitude is allowed the press in the discussion of all public affairs. A fair comment on any matter of public interest is no longer punishable in England as a crime or as a civil wrong, and the liberty of free discussion is the right of every British subject. The productions of political authors are rather encouraged and but seldom harshly treated by the English courts, which acknowledge the right of the people to discuss any grievances they may wish to complain of, as well as the right of a journalist to canvass and censure the acts and policy of the government, although this right is often abused by incorrect and unfair approval or censure of government measures.

Without the salutary ordeal of the press in the restraint of tyranny and injustice, the laws and constitution of a state when reflecting the will of an arbitrary power would become a system of oppression which might well make the people exclaim with Shakespeare, "We are steel to the very back, yet wrung with *wrongs* more than our backs can bear," while voiceless to resist or complain.

There are, of course, proper safeguards against the abuse of this liberty enjoyed by the press. It is a misdemeanor to speak or write and publish anything incorrect or unjust which tends to bring into hatred or contempt the sovereign or his ministers, or the government and constitution of the realm, or either House of Parliament, or the courts of justice, or to excite His Majesty's subjects to attempt the alteration of any matter in church or state otherwise than by constitutional means. A noteworthy inhibition of English law as regards the press is that of anticipating the actions of criminal and civil judicial courts and endeavoring to influence such bodies by molding public opinion beforehand to the expectation of a certain course of action.

The American Congress is empowered under the American constitution to protect the right of free speech and liberty of the press guaranteed by the federal and state constitutions.

Both in England and in the United States anyone, although permitted to write and publish what he pleases, becomes liable to punish-

ment if he makes a bad use of this liberty in contravention of the law. If he unjustly attacks a person by written or printed words, or if his writing is treasonable or contravenes any law against morality he commits an offense for which he may be tried upon information or indictment. Such limitations upon the press do not infringe, but regulate its right to free expression, and preserve that right from an abuse by the few which is calculated to injure society and prove detrimental to the public welfare and which would bring it into well-deserved odium and contempt.

This liberty of the press which exults in its freedom to deal as it pleases with every topic under the sun, subject to the few limitations thus imposed upon it for the sake of the most sacred rights of the individual and the welfare of the state, too often degenerates into license. The secular newspaper frequently hastens to minister to all tastes, to all leanings and prejudices, beliefs and unbeliefs, and indeed its pages are generally filled with everything except the one thing most necessary—that which is lasting—appertaining to the spiritual welfare of man. Its imposing office, when built upon the foundation of passions and cravings which are purely ephemeral and prove or tend to prove mimetical to the real concern of man's redeemed and regenerated soul (just as when some costly public building owes its splendor to political exigency rather than practical need), is no proof of real success.

The exaltation of wordly success by word and photograph is ministered to by the daily columns of the "yellow press" with unquestioning existence that is most apt to pervert the judgment, especially of young and inexperienced readers as to what constitutes progress and success rightly considered.

On account of the advantage which the secular paper, free to deal with an almost inexhaustible list of subjects, possesses over the more restrained publication, possessed of higher ideals and carrying them into practice—the Catholic newspaper, for instance—it can obtain and retain an influence, a sort of mesmerism over the minds of daily readers in a field of circulation where a Catholic newspaper could not hope to have the slightest encouragement.

Milton, in his characteristically lofty and impressive style, protested in his *Areopagitica,* "a speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing," against the orders issued by the Long Parliament, continuing restrictions similar to those imposed against the press by the Star Chamber, and he designated that speech as a protest written "in order to deliver the press from the restraints with which it was encumbered; that the power of determining what was true and what was false, what ought to be published and what suppressed might no

longer be entrusted to a few illiterate and illiberal individuals, who refused their sanction to any work which contained views or sentiments at all above the level of vulgar superstition." If Milton were living today he might indignantly protest against the great space given to frivolous and mostly inane details of sport news in our dailies, the flashy theatrical advertisements, the prurient scandals and police reports, the craze for novelties and for publishing sensational news, most of which is presented in such a way that grossly exaggerated inferences are drawn by the readers. He might, if living today, protest in noble prose or verse against the liberty extended by a recent English court decision to a society in England, designated as the Secular Society, to assail with impunity the truths of Christianity and spread the doctrine that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. The ground upon which the court based its decision was that of public policy, a fact which might be construed as an ironical condemnation of the excessive liberty of the press at the present day, even in England, where time and again its courts have asserted that Christianity in England is part of its common law.

The habit of good reading must become a powerful aid in acquiring proper discrimination as to what is worth reading, and this is a cogent argument in favor of the Catholic magazine and of the daily Catholic newspaper as a counter-influence against the secular newspaper's monopolizing sway.

The financial difficulty of conducting a daily Catholic paper need not appall us. Might not the daily Catholic newspaper attain partially at least the same success as the secular paper attains by its frequency of publication and correspondingly frequent visits to our households? It is not necessary that a Catholic newspaper should wholly disassociate itself from the publication of matters not immediately relevant to the Church, but which will ever remain of wholesome interest to the reader.

When the present unstable world conditions are supplanted by true "normalcy" and there is a reconsideration of the question of what constitutes real value, the press, now laboring under such disadvantages as circulation (*the sine qua non* for its existence), must rearrange the curriculum of its subjects to the gain of good reading, and the Catholic press particularly then will find itself under very propitious circumstances.

It does not seem, however, that a consummation so devoutly desired as the general elevation of the secular press to higher standards by the proper use of its great liberty with a due regard for the propor-

tion of things, can be expected for some time to come. With European diplomats playing with fire and world conditions in a feverish state awaiting the cast of issues trembling in the balance, the greed for sensational news, even if it be a story of sin and shame, remains insatiate. Morbid appetites must still be satisfied by the newspaper reporter ready to defend his occupation as scavenger for certain readers whose vulgar tastes he creates and whets, on the plea that what he supplies them is news. To effect this purpose worth-while reading must be subordinated or even abandoned for space wanted to feature the sordid details of some sad story of misfortune, the miserable victims of which are exposed in lurid colors to the public gaze regardless of their individual guiltlessness and of the added pain and misery caused to distressed parents and others whose hearts tenaciously cling to the accused by the sacred ties of natural affections outraged by such callous indifference, the unlovely outgrowth of the worship for the great magician News. Always charity hopeth great things and well as believeth all things, and there is hope that in the regeneration of world institutions and the fall of this idol, screening a multitude of sins, will come the true use of the power of the press in serving the spiritual and intellectual wants of the people.

JOHN E. FAGAN.

IN NATURE'S REALM

About the Sand-Wasp

"And a bank for the wasp to live in."—*John Keats.*

THE sand-wasp exemplifies many virtues, but chiefly foresight, in that it not only makes a roomy cradle for its offspring, but provisions the cell as well. The proper pronoun, however, to use in this connection should indicate the feminine gender, since it is the female that possesses this streak of intelligence.

Like all digger-wasps, the species choosing to excavate cells in the earth as safe prisons for the young, are solitary in their habits. That is, each female takes care of her young, yet there is no family life whatever as in the social hornets and yellow-jackets. Her mate dies early, leaving her the entire work of bringing a new generation into the world and insuring its safety to adulthood. To this she is fully equal.

Digger-wasps are divided into several families, by entomologists, because of structural differences. Some species burrow into the ground, others in wood; others use the ready-made cavities of reeds or straws, or construct a tube out of mud. But sand-wasp, consisting of many species, chooses to confide her offspring to Mother Earth. Nearly all have the habit of storing up living animals as food for the young, first stinging this provender into a comatose condition. Some provide grasshoppers, others crickets, others flies, spiders, caterpillars, bees, beetles; but a selection of food once made, each species continues to use the one originally chosen.

"The nest-making habits, when carefully observed, will prove to be of absorbing interest," says Mr. Kellogg. "On the broad, salt marshes of the western shore of San Francisco Bay, near Stanford University, I have often watched an interesting species of wasp at work. This is one of the genus Ammophila, the thread-waisted sand-diggers. The marshes are nearly covered with a dense growth of a low, fleshy-leaved plant, the samphire or pickle-weed, but here and there are small, perfectly bare, level, sandy places, which shine white and sparkling in the sun because of a thin incrustation of salt. In September these bare places are taken possession of by

many female Ammophilas, which make short, vertical nest-burrows all over the ground.

"An Ammophila having chosen a site for its nest, bites out a small, circular piece of the salty crust, and with its strong jaws digs out, bit by bit, a little well. Each pellet dug out is carried away by the wasp, flying a foot or two from the mouth of the tunnel, and dropped. To emerge from the hole the wasp always backs upward out of it, and while digging keeps up a low, humming sound.

"After the tunnel is dug about three inches deep, she covers up the mouth with a bit of salt crust or little pebbles, and flies away. Some minutes later she comes back, carrying a limp inch-worm about an inch long, which she drags down into the nest. Away she goes again, and soon returns with another inch-worm, repeating the process until from five to ten caterpillars have been stored in the tunnel. All these are alive, but each has been stung in one of its nerve-centers so that it is paralyzed. Finally, down she goes and lays a single egg, attaching it to one of the paralyzed caterpillars. She then fills the tunnel with pellets of earth, carefully chewing up the larger pieces so as to make a close, well-packed filling. Lastly, she carefully smooths off the surface and puts a small, flat piece of salt crust on top, so that the site of the tunnel shall be as nearly indistinguishable as possible.

"Ammophilas are common all over the country, and the nest-building of various species has been watched by other observers. The use by an individual Ammophila of a small pebble, held in the jaws, as a tool to pound down and smooth off the earth has been twice recorded, once in Wisconsin and once in Kansas. These are perhaps our only records of the use of a tool by an insect."

The Kansas record, made by Professor S. W. Williston, of the State University, makes interesting reading: "When the excavation had been carried to the required depth, the wasp, after a survey of the premises, flying away, soon returned with a large pebble in its mandibles, which it carefully deposited within the opening; then standing over the entrance, with her four posterior feet she (I say she, for it was evident they were all females) rapidly and most amusingly scraped the dust with her two front feet, 'hand over hand', back beneath her, till she had filled the hole above the stone to the top. The operation so far was remarkable enough, but the next procedure was more so. When she had heaped up the dirt to her satisfaction, she again flew away and immediately returned with a smaller pebble, perhaps an eighth of an inch in diameter, and then standing more nearly erect, with the front feet folded beneath her, she pressed down the dust all over and about the opening, smoothing

off the surface and accompanying the action with a peculiar rasping sound. After all this was done, and she spent several minutes each time in thus stamping the earth so that only a keen eye could detect any abrasion of the surface, she laid aside the little pebble and flew away.

"A few minutes later she returned carrying with difficulty a paralyzed, soft-bodied caterpillar, which was laid on the ground beside the concealed burrow. The latter was then quickly opened and the stone cap withdrawn and laid to one side, the caterpillar was dragged down the hole, and soon the wasp emerged to close the opening as carefully as before. Then she flew off in search of another victim. Returning with it, it was also carried to the bottom of the burrow; and this little drama repeated until the wasp mother was satisfied that her young would be well fed until it was able to forage for itself. Then she closed the cell for the last time and went away."

Another observer, Mr. Theodore Pergande, reported that while on a gravelly slope he noticed a female sand-wasp belonging to the genus Ammophila, flying about in a peculiar fashion.

"Presently it alighted, and ran briskly about in every direction with its head close to the ground and the abdomen elevated; while its antennæ were in constant agitation as if searching for something important, though nothing in any way striking the eye could be seen on the bare sand which possibly could have attracted its attention.

"Suddenly it stopped at a certain spot, pressed the head close to the ground, and commenced beating the ground with its abdomen, producing at the same time an audible and quiet sharp sound similar to *bss, bss, bss,* tapping with each sound the earth with its abdomen.

"It continued this performance for some time, running or lying off a short distance twice or thrice during brief intervals. Finally it picked up with its jaws a small pebble, carried it to the mysterious spot and deposited it on top, pressing the pebble down as much as possible to insure its remaining in position. Running then again a distance away, it picked up another pebble and placed it close to the first one; after a while a third was added.

"No more pebbles of the desired size being near enough at hand, it ran some distance farther, when it came across a pebble which appeared to suit its purpose, took hold and lifted it, but unfortunately the shape of this little stone was such that it slipped from its jaws. It tried again and again for quite awhile to obtain a good hold, though without success, when it left it in apparent disgust. Running about after this failure for some time in search of a more suitable stone, but not finding what was wanted, she returned to her little

monument of pebbles, and commenced to rearrange them and press thing was well done, she flew away, not to return.

"I removed the little stones carefully, but could find nothing in the sand immediately beneath them. At a depth of three inches, however, was a large caterpillar, as fresh and bright as if it had been placed there a moment before. A small, slightly curved, cylindrical egg was attached to the middle of the caterpillar's body. This was the egg of the Ammophila. For its protection, and that of the resulting larva, the mother instinct had taken the trouble of piling up the pebbles. Possibly she knew of some fly or other enemy which could burrow through the sand to the larva, and placed the stones as an obstacle not to be removed."

Mr. Weed describes a certain sand-wasp and her victim: "One hot August afternoon, while watching the wasps and bees about a small sand-bank thrown up by the spring torrent of a New England brook, my attention was attracted by a small, black wasp apparently digging promiscuously in the level sand. In a moment, however, she came to a concealed burrow, the mouth of which she cleared rapidly with her feet.

"Then she went to a place a couple of inches away, picked up a young grasshopper lying there in a comatose state, and dragged it down the hole, backing in herself and pulling her victim head first. She came out almost immediately and, facing away from the opening, began scraping sand towards its mouth, using all her feet, more or less, but especially the hind ones. This was continued until the surface was perfectly smooth, with no indication of a burrow. The wasp then turned around two or three times, going over the ground carefully to see, I supposed, that the work was well done and that no tell-tale traces were left. Apparently satisfied on this point, she flew away at 2.35 P. M.

"The wasp had been gone but a moment when a little two-winged fly appeared upon the scene and ran about over the sand as if looking for something. It continued to move restlessly about for three or four minutes and then flew away. At 2.41 Mrs. Sand-wasp returned, carrying another comatose young grasshopper of a different species from the first. She alighted with her burden about three inches from the concealed burrow, and dragged the victim a little nearer. Then she found the hole, dug out the opening, dragged the grasshopper down head first, came out immediately, covered the mouth of the burrow, and flew away, the whole operation occupying just one minute.

"The next grasshopper evidently proved harder to find, for the wasp did not return with it till 3.01, the little fly having come back

in the interim and spent some time in a fruitless examination of the region of the hole. When the wasp returned with her third victim, she placed it on the surface of the sand, found the opening, dug out the sand at its mouth, and dragged the grasshopper down head first. I then put my collecting-bottle over the hole, and three or four minutes later the wasp came out and was caught.

"Digging the sand carefully away, I followed up the oblique burrow, which was about three inches long, and ended two inches from the surface. At the bottom lay the three grasshoppers on their backs, each with its head toward the closed end of the burrow. On the neck of the mdidle one was a small, white, slightly curved, cylindrical egg which the wasp had doubtless placed there during the last visit.

"The grasshoppers were taken to the laboratory and placed in a glass tube, in the hope that the egg would hatch and the wasp larva be reared. But the conditions were not sufficiently natural, probably because the atmosphere was too dry, and the grasshoppers gradually shriveled up. When first brought in they were in a paralyzed condition, unable to walk or jump, although when touched they readily moved their legs and antennæ."

This habit of stinging the prey used to provision the nest so as to paralyze, not kill it, is well adapted to assuring the larva nicely preserved food right at hand, sufficient to nourish it during its growth. But how did the wasp learn that a paralyzed grasshopper would not decay, and would be living, but helpless as long as the waspling would need food? And how did she learn to sting her prey in just the right place to produce this paralysis? The amazing expertness and accuracy displayed in plunging the sting into exactly those spots where injury will give rise to exactly the condition desired, the whole scheme of nest-building and provisioning for the sake of the young the mother will likely never know; the fact that the offspring females will follow the same plans without ever seeing them carried out, has led to discussions as to whether it is a high form of instinct or a reasoning process which guides the worker.

The earlier opinion, of course, was that the insect is guided by inherited instinct incapable of any marked changes except through generations of slow adaptation. J. H. Fabre, the famous French scientist, was of that belief, and his two chapters dealing with the "Science of Instinct and the Ignorance of Instinct" are masterly studies. First, he pictures the routine of the nest-making, and the catching, paralyzing and storing of the living food by the solitary wasp, for its young. Then he shows the limitations of instinct.

"Nothing is impossible to instruct, however great be the difficulty," he says, and after this high tribute to the wonderful inner guide Nature

has implanted in unreasoning animals, he goes on: "Nothing is difficult to instinct so long as the action moves in the unchanging groove allotted to the animal, but, again, nothing is easy to instinct if the action deviates from it. The very insect which amazes us and alarms us by its high intelligence, will, a moment later, astonish us by its stupidity before some act extremely simple, but strange to its usual habits. The Sphex will offer an example."

He then describes the burrow of this species of sand-wasp; then goes on: "Now let us try some experiments to see how the insect behaves amid circumstances new to it." His four experiments are too long, fascinating reading though they be, to be given here, but they seem to prove his conclusion that "Nature has endowed her with only those faculties called for under ordinary circumstances by the interests of the larva, and these blind faculties, unmodified by experience, being sufficient for the preservation of the race, the animal cannot go farther. I end then as I began: instinct knows everything in the unchanging paths laid out for it; beyond them it is entirely ignorant."

But Mr. and Mrs. Peckham, of Wisconsin, who made extensive experiments with wasps, even those used by Fabre, believe their activities are guided sometimes by intelligence,—those conscious actions more or less modified by experience coming under this order. For instance, Fabre took advantage of the moment when the wasp was out of sight in her den to remove her prey to a little distance, with the result that when she came up she brought her cricket to the same spot and left it as before, while she visited the interior of the nest; Fabre repeated this experiment about forty times in succession with this one wasp and cricket, and always with the same result, drawing the conclusion that nothing less than the performance of a certain series of acts in a certain order would satisfy her impulse. She must place her prey just so close to the doorway; she must then descend and examine the nest, and after that must at once drag it down, any disturbance of this routine causing her to refuse to proceed.

But the Peckhams found that seven times was enough to cause the sand-wasp to break over her rule and carry her prey into the nest without the preliminary investigation. "How shall this change in a long-established custom be explained except by saying that her reason led her to adapt herself to circumstances? She was enough of a conservative to prefer the old way, but was not such a slave to custom as to be unable to vary it."

The nest made, stocked and sealed up, the egg develops in from one to three days into a footless maggot-like creature which feeds

upon the store provided for it, increasing rapidly in size, and entering the pupal stage in from three days to two weeks. In the cocoon it passes through its final metamorphosis, emerging as a perfect insect perhaps in two or three weeks, or, in many cases, after the winter months have passed and summer has come again. Probably no solitary wasp lives through the winter, those that come out in the spring or summer perishing in the autumn.

The great golden digger is a brilliant and powerful sand-wasp, of a rust-red color with a dense, golden down. It is common from Massachusetts south and is widely distributed. Mr. Packard describes his observation of this insect at work:

"In the last week of July, and during August and early in September, we noticed nearly a dozen of these wasps busily engaged in digging their holes in a gravelly walk. In previous seasons they were more numerous, burrowing into grassy banks near the walk. The holes were four to six inches deep. In beginning its hole, the wasp dragged away with its teeth a stone one-half as large as itself to a distance of eight inches from the hole, while it pushed away others with its head. In beginning its burrow, it used its large and powerful paws almost entirely, digging to the depth of an inch in five minutes, completing its hole in about half an hour.

"After having inserted its head into the hole, where it loosened the earth with its jaws and threw it out of the hole with its jaws and fore legs, it would retreat backward and push the dirt still farther back from the mouth of the cell with its hind legs. In cases where the farther progress of the work was stopped by a stone too large for the wasp to remove or dig around, it would abandon it and begin a new hole. Just as soon as it reached the required depth the wasp flew a few feet to the adjoining bank and falling upon a grasshopper, stung and paralyzed it instantly, bore it to its nest, and was out of sight for a moment, and while in the bottom of its hole must have deposited its eggs in its victim. Reappearing, it began to draw the sand back into the hole, scratching it in quite briskly by means of its spiny fore tarsi, while standing on its two hind pairs of legs. It thus threw in half an inch of dirt upon the grasshopper and then flew off. In this way one will make two or three such holes in an afternoon. The walk was hard and composed of coarse sea-gravel, and the rapidity with which the wasp worked her way in with tooth and nail was marvellous."

The cicada-killer is another giant of the family, measuring one and a fourth inches in length. It is black, sometimes of a rusty color, and has the abdomen banded with yellow. It digs burrows in the earth, two feet or more in depth, and provisions each with a

cicada. "Many a cicada-song has been suddenly silenced because the singer was pounced upon and carried off alive, but helpless to be buried in the den of this fierce, handsome insect of prey," says Mr. Comstock.

Dr. C. V. Riley has described the life history of this species, and her clever way of managing the large and powerful insect she makes her prey. For in the adult state the dog-day cicada, or harvest-fly, lives upon the branches of trees, where, during the hot summer day, the air vibrates with its noisy song. Pounced upon by a female wasp, and stung to paralization, it becomes a heavy burden to be transported to the neighboring bank in which the hollow cell has been prepared for its reception.

"As the wasp is unable to fly upward with so heavy a burden, she sometimes—when in the preliminary struggle both wasp and cicada have tumbled to the ground—laboriously drags its up a tree, from whence to start her flight. It also often happens that the burrow is too far off to be reached at a single flight, so that the wasp may have to drag her heavy load up two or three trees before the desired spot is reached.

"Her burrow is made in dry soil, and has at the end a spherical cell. In this the cicada is placed back downward. The wasp then deposits a long, white egg on the ventral side of the victim. In a few days the egg hatches into a larva that feeds upon the juicy tissues of the cicada, developing so rapidly that in about ten days it is full grown. It now spins a silken cocoon, within which it passes the winter without changing it to the pupa or chrysalis state. This transformation takes place the following spring, and shortly afterward the insect again changes to an adult cicada-killer, thus completing the cycle of existence."

Sometimes cicada-killer has several laterial cells in each burrow, with one or two cicadas in each and an egg in possession of the dungeon.

The velvet ants are sand-wasps resembling ants in the general form of the body; the males are winged and frequent flowers, the females are wingless, but can run very fast and are good stingers. The body is densely covered with hair, which gives the insect the appearance of being clothed in velvet; the colors are usually black and scarlet, arranged in rings about the body. The largest species abounds in Texas, where it is known as the cow-killer, because of a popular superstition that its sting is very dangerous to live stock.

Some species of velvet-ants dig burrows in beaten paths and store them with flies and other insects; others enter bee-hives and kill

and eat the rightful occupants; others live as guests or parasites in the nests of other wasps, or of bees, being fed or helping themselves to the general stores, according to their position.

Another set of sand-wasps dig into the ground until some underground insect, usually the larva of some beetle, is found, which is stung and left with a wasp-egg upon it. The female makes no attempt to build a nest or to remove the prey from its position as found. The hatched wasp larva feeds upon the grub, but in such a way as not to kill it before its own development is complete. These insects occur in sunny, hot and sandy places, more than forty American species being known. The most common one is a trifle over half an inch in length, is of a shining black, and deposits its eggs on the white grub of the June-beetle.

The spider-wasps are mostly black or steely-blue with bluish or light-bronzy wings. They are slender in form, with long legs, and with a bunty look due to the short "stem" which attaches the abdomen to the body. They are so called because they provision their nests with spiders. One of these is the giant tarantula-hawk, common in California and the Southwest, which stores its burrows with this poisonous spider. Many a hard-fought battle do they have, a most sensational combat for a watcher to witness. "It does not always come off victor in these flights," says Mr. Kellogg, "or at least conquers the tarantula only at the expense of its own life. After one such long and fierce battle I found both fighters *hors du combat,* the tarantula paralyzed by the wasp's sting, but the wasp dying from the poisonous wounds made by the great fangs of the spider."

It is not possible to mention the many kinds of sand-wasps, but one of them deserves special attention. This is the genus Bembex, with habits strikingly different from those of the tribe. For Bembex does not store up food for the larvæ in advance, but during the larval life of her offspring the mother continues to catch flies and bring them to the covered nest, having each time to dig away the loose soil and to scrape it in again as she leaves the nest.

Neither does she paralyze the two-winged flies upon which she preys, but kills them, by biting them on the back with her jaws. A cell about three inches deep is made in solid sand; in this a dead fly is placed with an egg of the Bembex attached to it. When the egg hatches, the larva feeds on the fly, and thereafter the mother brings freshly killed flies every day, seeking larger prey as the larva grows. When full grown, by which time the larva may have devoured eighty flies, it spins a cocoon of silk and sand, within which it changes to a pupa, then later to the adult wasp. Between the visits of the mother the entrance to the cell is usually covered with sand; often a small

stone is placed over each opening as an additional safeguard against parasites or other enemies.

Still another species prepares a cell and stores it with caterpillars, badly injured but not paralyzed. These lie at the bottom of the cell, and the egg of the wasp is suspended from a silken thread attached to the roof of the cell. Says the Danish entomologist who discovered this odd device: "When the young grub is hatched it suspends itself to this thread by a silken sheath, in which it hangs, head downwards, over its victims. Does one of them struggle? Quick as lightning, it retreats up the sheath out of harm's way."

As Mr. Sharp well says, the great variety in the habits of the various species, the extreme industry, skill, and self-denial displayed in carrying out their voluntary labors, render the solitary wasps one of the most instructive groups of the animal kingdom. "The individuals of one generation only in rare cases see even the commencement of the life of the next; the progeny for the benefit of which they labor with unsurpassable skill and industry being unknown to them. Were such a solicitude displayed by ourselves we should connect it with a high sense of duty, and poets and moralists would vie in its laudation. But having dubbed ourselves the higher animals, we ascribe the eagerness of the solitary wasp to an impulse or instinct, and we exterminate their numerous species from the face of the earth forever, without even seeking to make a prior acquaintance with them. Meanwhile our economists and moralists devote their volumes to admiration of the progress of the civilization that effects this destruction and tolerates this negligence."

HARRIETTE WILBUR.

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